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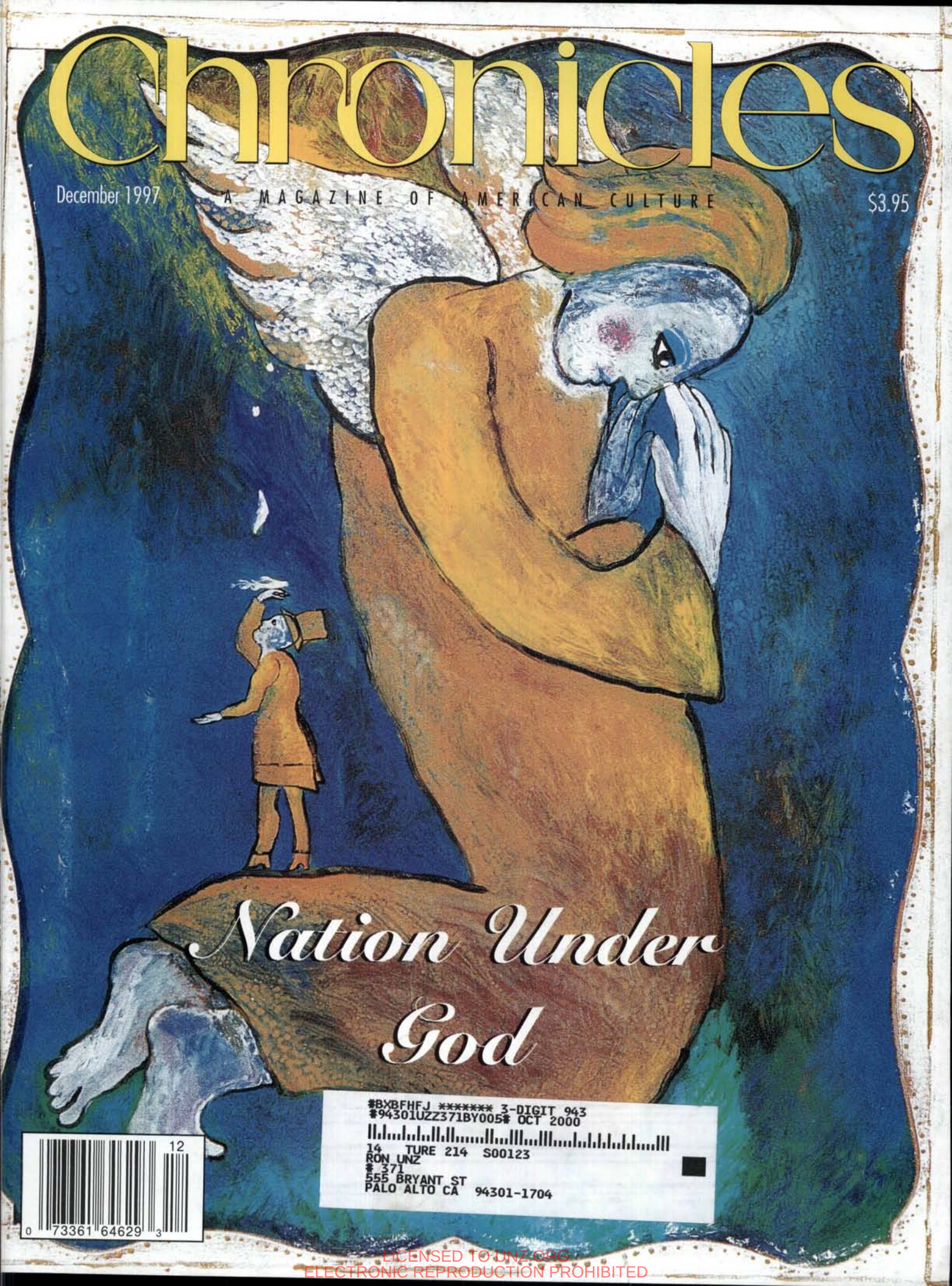

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PUZZLED BY U.S. POLICY TOWARD THE BALKANS?

America's Intervention in the Balkans

Why did America adopt a deeply flawed, anti-Christian, pro-Muslim policy in the Balkans? What are the implications of that policy, not only for the people of the area, but for the rest of Europe, and—above all—for America itself?

America's Intervention in the Balkans is the result of an international conference held in Chicago in March 1997, which was sponsored by The Lord Byron Foundation for Balkan Studies and *Chronicles*. Contributors include prominent scholars specializing in Southeast Europe and *Chronicles* editors and writers, such as:

"WHAT IS GOOD FOR AMERICA" ***by Sir Alfred Sherman***

"The war in Bosnia was America's war in every sense of the word. The U.S. administration helped start it, kept it going, and prevented its early end."

⚜

"TODAY SARAJEVO, TOMORROW CHICAGO: THE TYRANNY OF HUMAN RIGHTS" ***by Thomas Fleming***

"The so-called New World Order . . . is only the American Empire doing business under a new logo. . . . As an ancient Scot said of the First World Order, the Roman Empire: 'they make a desert, they call it peace.'"

⚜

"THE PRICE OF EMPIRE" ***by Samuel Francis***

"The ultimate price of empire, its ultimate domestic consequence, is the death of the very people and civilization of the society that chooses . . . the path of empire."

Other contributors include:

SRDJA TRIFKOVIC ("*Serbian Politics and U.S. Strategy in the Balkans*"), **MICHAEL STENTON** ("*America in Bosnia: A Sign of Things to Come*"), **YELENA GUSSKOVA** ("*The Role of Russia*"), **JAMES GEORGE JATRAS** ("'*Benevolent Global Hegemony': The U.S. as the World's Policeman*"), **RAJU G.C. THOMAS** ("*The New Security and Moral Agenda in a U.S.-Dominant World*"), **SCOTT P. RICHERT** ("*New Cops on the Block*"), and **JOSEPH SOBRAN** ("*The (New) Ugly American*").

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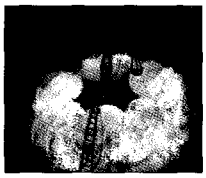

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Bilingual Education

In his September correspondence ("Letter from Nueva York: The Elite of El Bronx"), Robert Berman rightly focuses on the separatist aspect of "bilingual" education as practiced at Hostos Community College and elsewhere in the United States. This pernicious pedagogy is well on its way to creating an unbridgeable, permanent gap between Hispanics and the larger American society—if it has not done so already.

After six years of teaching English at Hostos, I tendered my resignation two years ago. I had come to feel that I was an unwitting cog in a conspiracy to create and perpetuate a vast population of semieducated, semiliterate Hispanics. I decided that I could not continue to perpetrate this educational fraud upon the Hispanic population of New York City.

As educators in the United States, it is our responsibility to teach our students English—that tongue which is the perfect blend of Saxon clarity and Latin sweetness, whose majestic and dulcet tones have resonated in the works of Chaucer and Shakespeare through the centuries—a language we should be teaching our students to love and cherish, not to hate and despise; a language studied avidly and spoken joyfully everywhere in the world—everywhere, that is, save in the New York City school system. I have taught in Italy, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, and in all these countries my students were always very enthusiastic and dedicated to perfecting their English. Only here in New York are students taught to contemn our glorious English tongue.

The "bilingual" educators nationwide have failed in their duty to their students, and this failure threatens the bonds of national cohesion that unite us as a people. America has become what Theodore Roosevelt warned against: "a tangle of squabbling nationalities."

—Kevin Beary
New York, NY

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On Secular Judaism

For many years I have read Professor Neusner's polemics with profit and delight. I have marveled at his skill in combining an arcane discipline with provocative rhetoric. Despite this respect, I nonetheless find myself disagreeing with Neusner's November essay ("Jews Without Judaism") about "irreligious" Jews. For one thing, it is problematic to treat Jews like a Christian creedal community. Jews as a group have never been bound primarily (and certainly not now) by individual adherence to theological doctrine. They have *always* defined themselves as a nation (*am yisrael*) to which one belongs first by blood ties and then by the performance of communal rituals.

Spinoza, whom Neusner cites, makes a similar observation in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, where he contrasts the ethnic and collectivist aspects of the Old Testament to the individualist and universalist New Testament. Though certain exceptions can be found in prophetic Judaism (as Spinoza himself noted), Spinoza's contrast between Jews and Christians seems generally true. Jewish concerns are for the fate of a national community that is held together partly by ritual obligations traced to divine revelation and rabbinic commentary. Christians, in contrast, stress the salvation of individual souls, achieved by faith in the redemptive promise of a personal savior. They also understand this promise in terms of creedal symbols and confessional statements which define membership in specific Christian communions. Undoubtedly aware of this difference between Jews and Christians, Elliott Abrams makes a case for Jewish ritual observance on nontheological ethnic grounds, i.e., to keep Jews from intermarrying and assimilating in a friendly American environment. The same concerns are now regularly used by the Orthodox Rabbinic Council of America to recruit members for their congregations and schools. Such concerns are understandable given the identitarian and territorial nationalism which is integral to Jewish life.

National communities, united by ritual, are different from collections of individual believers. The agnostic founders

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of the state of Israel were good Jews motivated by love of Israel (*ahavath yisrael*)—or so I was told by Talmud instructors in an Orthodox school I attended. And although Norman Podhoretz may not accept the theological formulation that Professor Neusner wishes to use to define Jews, the orthodox Yeshivah University awarded Podhoretz (undoubtedly for his Zionist zeal) an annual award for outstanding Jewish service. Alan Dershowitz has also received multiple awards from Jewish organizations for his devotion to the Jewish community. Outside of transplanted ultraorthodox Eastern European settlements, Dershowitz's theological improprieties do not upset very many of his fellow Jews.

Another problem with Neusner's restrictive definition is quantitative. How observant must a Jew be to qualify as such under his standard? While some Jews keep fewer biblical and rabbinic commandments than Rabbi Neusner, others keep more. Do these Jews have a right to declare Neusner non-Jewish by virtue of nonobservance in the same way he challenges the Jewish identity of Alan Dershowitz?

But Professor Neusner's most startling proposition is that "Jewish ethnicity" has been discovered only recently, both as a response to, and a symptom of, declining Jewish religiosity. In *A People That Shall Dwell Alone*, psychologist Kevin MacDonald cites the copious Jewish restrictions placed on intermarriage since the age of Ezra and Nehemiah. Despite the reductionist nature of his thesis that Judaism is a "genetic strategy," MacDonald does demonstrate the ethnic and genetic concern shaping these prohibitions. Like Japanese Shintoists, Indian Parsees, and Armenian Oriental Orthodox, Jews have refrained from contacts with outsiders for ethnic (as well as other) reasons. Growing up in a traditional Central European Jewish community in the United States, I would have had to be cognitively challenged not to notice this fact. The members of my community married only those with "Jewish blood." Though a gentile, MacDonald seems to understand this Jewish fear of miscegenation as well as I did as a child, which is why neither of us is surprised that Jewish ethnicity has survived the disappearance of Jewish ritual observance.

—Paul Gottfried
Elizabethtown, PA

Dr. Neusner Replies:

Professor Gottfried accurately portrays the viewpoint of the sources that he believes should define "Judaism," and I do the same with mine. The question is, who has identified the definitive sources for the definition of Judaism, the religion? He invokes Spinoza, who was declared a heretic by the rabbis of Amsterdam. My definition derives from the Torah of Sinai, oral and written, which guided the rabbis of Amsterdam in their rejection of Spinoza. They had good reason. The sages of the Torah define "Israel" as a holy people who worship the one true God, and were called by God to Sinai. In other words, Israel is a community of faith, comparable to the Church, "the mystical body of Christ," as my colleague Bruce D. Chilton and I have shown in *Christianity and Judaism: the Formative Categories. II. The Body of Faith: Israel and Church* (Trinity Press International). By this definition of "Israel," deriving from the authoritative writings of the Torah, we deal with a religious community. Gottfried maintains there is no such religion as "Judaism," only a sociology, a politics, an ethnic culture. He speaks of ethnic customs and ceremonies, but the Torah speaks of God's commandments and the sanctification of Israel. On the question of Judaism as a religion he is wrong, and the authoritative sources of the Torah show how and why he is wrong.

But he is right, too, when he maintains that the Jews as a whole do not practice Judaism; some practice another religion, whether Buddhism or Christianity, and many practice none. Secular Jews therefore do not define Judaism, and Judaism does not dictate the opinions or practices of secular Jews. A Jew who does not believe in God and who does not accept the Torah, oral and written, as God's teaching, does not carry out commandments but mere customs, and his opinions are not statements of that religion. He may be a "good Jew" in some other context, by some other definition, but as an atheist, he cannot be deemed a faithful part of holy Israel, God's people, who meet and know God in the Torah. Professor Gottfried knows enough of the classical sources of Judaism to find in those sources ample evidence for the statements here set forth.

I do not mean to suggest that secular definitions of the Jews or of Israel or of "Judaism" do not compete with the religious one. The ethnic definition speaks of "the Jews," and refers to a community of fate, not of faith; to a group characterized by common traits or sentiments; or to an individual who regards himself as Jewish by some other criterion altogether. Some ethnics will invoke the Nuremberg definition of 1935: a single Jewish grandparent suffices. The political definition speaks of "Israel" as "the State of Israel," and it derives from Zionism, which defined the Jews as not only "a people, one people," but also as a political entity. The issue, then, is not settled by someone's declaration of who is a "good Jew." That is irrelevant to rigorous thought, based on clear categories and proportionate evidence. Theology, sociology, and politics frame matters in accord with a particular logic. The confusion of Gottfried's discourse, its appeal to heresy in place of theological norm, its introduction of distinctions ("collectivist/Old Testament" vs. "individualist/New Testament") that have no standing in contemporary scholarship, its argument from cases—and rather weird examples at that (Dershowitz indeed!)—all of this will stand corrected upon further reflection on his part.

So the issue is not "Jewish identity." A Jew by the law of Judaism is the child of a Jewish mother, and however he may sin by the definition of the Torah, he never ceases to be "Israel," in the Torah's definition. And judged by the Torah (written and oral), holy Israel, God's people, is not answerable to Kevin MacDonald, Alan Dershowitz, or Elliott Abrams, but only to God, who, happily, reveals Himself in the Torah as infinitely merciful and possessed of a good sense of humor and the patience to sit through age-old arguments about the definition of Israel.

On the New New Math

To Marian Kester Coombs' article ("Dumb and Number," October) on the dumbing-down of math standards, I say, "Hear, hear." In fact, the complaint about the downgrading of mathematical knowledge is gathering strength among mathematicians as well as the public. I hear anecdotes all the time of a freshman who, asked to divide 387 by ten, takes out his calculator.

But on Coombs' other pitch—concerning the feminist victory in the

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schools and in the Department of Education, and the feminist slant on valid knowledge having effected the present unsatisfactory standards of K-12 math education—I see other historical threads leading to the present situation. Mathematicians have always been unhappy at the public lack of understanding of any but the most basic mathematics. It seems to us that insight into the reasoning by which mathematical truths have been developed would help the world walk a little straighter. Thus in the era of "The New Math" (1955-72) we used our temporary influence to cause the creation and over-advertising of curricula that would accomplish this feat. As it turned out, the curriculum itself was flawed by lack of understanding of how it would play out when it got into the trenches; the result was a disaster. It was a convenient excuse for those hellbent on downgrading algorithms and memorization, and it ended up blamed for much that was not in it.

The reaction, dubbed "Back to Basics," kicked off by the National Institute of Education, was similarly criticized. The results were worse than the New Math.

The current vision of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), as expressed (oh, so badly) in the 1989 Standards, is a reaction to the "Back to Basics" reaction, and I believe it would have taken place in the total absence of feminism. Many of the writers of the new standards were themselves intimately involved, though as quite young men, in the New Math, and saw its failure. The lesson they took from that failure was narrow: they are not repeating quite the same things for which the New Math was publicly damned. Still, some form of "understanding" is attempted, to the detriment, down in the trenches, of drill, memory, facts, and standard procedures.

There is one significant difference between the New Math revolution and the New New Math one: the mathematicians are not in the game this time, having given up the field to educators, i.e., professors of math education in the colleges that prepare K-12 teachers, their mentors in education research, and the officialdom of the teaching profession in the NEA, NCTM, and the state education departments.

—Ralph A. Raimi
Department of Mathematics
University of Rochester
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CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

THE UNITED NATIONS has generated more debate on Capitol Hill in recent months than at any time since its birth 52 years ago. Several factors account for this recent strain in relations, including the end of the Cold War and increased scrutiny by a Republican-controlled Congress. However, the excesses and missteps of the United Nations itself have been the greatest contributors to the present crisis in U.S.-U.N. relations.

The United Nations was established in 1945 to maintain global peace and security; achieve international cooperation in solving economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian problems; and promote human rights. Despite the idealistic nature of such goals, the United States can justify its membership in the world body only if it advances America's national interests and foreign policy objectives.

The decisions and actions of the great powers of the world have the most impact on global events. During the last 50 years, the United States has acted unilaterally or in concert with its allies to achieve its foreign policy goals—involving the U.N. has been little more than an afterthought. Despite this fact, there remain benefits to U.S. membership in the U.N. The U.N. provides a forum for the U.S. to communicate with both its friends and foes. As the Gulf War demonstrated, the U.N. can be used to build international coalitions to achieve U.S. foreign policy objectives. Membership in the United Nations also helps promote America's leadership role in international politics. Finally, there are a few specialized U.N. agencies that perform invaluable services for the member states. They include the International Civil Aviation Organization, which helps set standards for international air traffic, and the International Postal Union and International Telecommunications Union, which help coordinate and set standards for intercountry communications.

Despite these specific and limited benefits of membership, far too many problems remain. The U.N. system is a massive, overlapping bureaucracy of 70-plus agencies and programs with a bloated staff of 50,000. Hundreds of U.N. agencies, departments, and offices are dedicated to agricultural policies alone! Even Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has called the U.N. bureaucracy "elephantine." The general administrative budget alone has grown from $20 *million* in 1945 to $10 *billion* today. Most of these agencies and programs perform work of little or no value. The large and expensive International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo and the U.N. Conference on the Environment and Development in Rio did little to solve the problems they were ostensibly addressing. One would be hard-pressed to argue that the United Nations Development Programme has achieved its stated goal of "contrib[uting] to the sustainable expansion of the world economy," or that the United Nations Industrial Development Organization has done much to further global industrial development. The bottom line is the United Nations spends most of its budget on salaries and expenses, not on achieving its idealistic goals. Why should the United States government continue to spend Americans' hard-earned tax dollars to fund such wasteful practices?

In addition to its fiscal irresponsibility, the U.N. has attempted to reach far beyond its limits and capabilities, while encroaching on U.S. sovereignty. Under the guidance of former Secretary General Boutros-Ghali, U.N. peacekeeping underwent a dramatic transformation. The traditional peacekeeping operation—lightly armed troops overseeing an existing peace settlement—was replaced by military operations in which heavily armed soldiers attempted to force peace onto unwilling participants. Somalia and Bosnia demonstrated the futility and costliness of such ambitious, nation-building exercises. In Somalia, several American soldiers lost their lives because of limitations placed on U.S. commanders by the U.N. operation.

In ways far less glaring than the tragic Somalia operation, the United Nations continues to encroach on American na-

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tional sovereignty. As I write these words, a U.N. human rights official is completing an investigation of America's use of the death penalty. The U.N. investigator, who has traveled throughout the United States collecting data, visiting prisons, and interviewing law enforcement officials, believes that the U.S. has expanded its use of the death penalty beyond the bounds set by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which the U.S. signed in 1992. Meanwhile, several U.S. parks and wilderness areas have been added to a U.N. list of unique and valuable natural or cultural sites. On the surface, such international designations may seem harmless. However, they limit public land-use options and negatively affect the value of adjoining private property.

The United Nations has outlived much of its usefulness and overreached its bounds. Unless drastic changes are instituted at the U.N. and the United States revamps its relationship with the international organization, other concerned members of Congress and I will continue to use our constitutional privileges to chasten the wayward world body and defend our national sovereignty.

—*Congressman Don Manzullo*

RUBY RIDGE and Waco are two nightmares now slowly fading from the public mind, but not because some law enforcement officials have learned anything. In Roby, Illinois, a 51-year-old widow named Shirley Ann Allen was ordered by a local judge to submit to a psychological profile after her relatives expressed concern about her behavior. When the police came to take her away, Mrs. Allen would have none of it. She met the arresting officers at the door with shotgun in hand, pumped off a couple of shells into the air, and graciously declined to come out.

Twelve days later, she was still declining, but so were the police who had laid siege to her house. On the first day of the siege—dubbed "Roby Ridge" by a local wag—state troopers surrounded her residence, turned off the power, closed up her well, flooded the place with searchlights, called in relatives to beg her to come out, fired beanbag bullets at her, and—was she to be spared nothing?—played Barry Manilow music around the clock. Still she didn't budge, to the dismay of the cops. "We'd like her to start going about business as usual," police spokesman Mark McDonald announced to an alarmed public. "I think most people would seek help before they die of starvation or lack of water." Whom exactly does Mr. McDonald expect Mrs. Allen to contact? The police, perhaps?

Around the same time, a white separatist and his family were also declining to come out of their home in La Verkin, Utah. Out there, however, there were no bullhorns, searchlights, or Manilow music, but only a lone county sheriff with a little common sense.

"Sure, we could go surround the place with SWAT teams and yell for him to come on out with his hands up," said Sheriff Glenwood Humphries of the effort to serve an arrest warrant on Johnny Bangerter. "But I'm not going to get a deputy or anybody killed over something as minor as a failure-to-appear warrant. The last thing I want is the federal government to come in here and pull another Waco. Johnny hasn't done anything that the feds would be interested in, and even if they were, the local sheriff should be the one to handle it."

Meanwhile, back in Roby, Mrs. Allen remained at large and the crisis of the untaken mental tests continued, but even the police were starting to doubt that they handled the situation correctly. "Has the police presence aggravated her situation?" asked Illinois State Police Director Terrance Gainer. "Common sense would tell you that it might."

"The frustration is," Gainer expanded philosophically, "we seem to have as a society so little faith in judges . . . and law enforcement. We're first to conclude there's mendacity involved." Why is that, chief?

—*Samuel Francis*

LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas, is still a potent symbol 40 years after the forcible integration of Central High School. That's why President Clinton chose Central High as the site of a speech in late September, one of many that he intends to deliver on race relations over the coming year. Paralyzed by the numerous scandals that he has brought upon his own administration, Clinton has abandoned the constitutional responsibilities of his office to act as a personal mediator between the races.

Biting his lip and looking concerned, the President told the crowd gathered in Little Rock, "Today, children of every race walk through the same door, but then they often walk down different halls . . . they eat at different tables. They even sit in different parts of the bleachers at the football game. Far too many communities are all white, all black, all Latino, all Asian."

Lest anyone object that the picture that he had just painted looks a lot like multiculturalism and diversity, Clinton went on to say that "we have to remember . . . the painful lessons of the civil wars and the ethnic cleansing around the world." He summed up almost half a century of social engineering with a monumentally irrelevant play on words: "The alternative to integration is not isolation or a new separate but equal, it is disintegration."

Clinton's speech illustrates the growing gulf between those who wield power in this country and the average man, white or black. Forty-three years after *Brown* v. *Board of Education*, American cities are returning to neighborhood schools (or, in Clinton's words, "resegregating"). Indeed, a few days before Clinton's speech, the school board in Little Rock took the first steps towards returning to neighborhood schools.

In Cleveland, an all-black school board, frustrated with declining test scores and federal control of the city's educational system, has thrown its support behind neighborhood schools. And in Oklahoma City, which Clinton has visited numerous times since the bombing of the Murrah federal building, black parents, distraught over poor academic standards at integrated institutions, joined together and demanded a return to neighborhood schools. Within months, test scores began to climb, even though the schools in black neighborhoods apparently receive less funding than those in white neighborhoods.

In 1954, America's public schools were among the best in the world; today, American students consistently rank near the bottom in math and science. Colleges and universities have been forced to offer an increasing number of remedial courses, not only in math and science, but in writing and reading. Here in Rockford, children as young as five years old stand on street corners at 6:00 A.M., waiting for a bus to take them to a school across town, even though they could walk to the school down the block.

"There are still people who can't get over it, who can't let it go, who can't

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go through the day unless they have somebody else to look down on," the President declared. He should know. Despite his best efforts, America's experiment in forced integration is coming to an end, but it will leave great devastation in its wake.

Those who oppose forced busing often claim that "children don't learn anything on a bus." That's not quite true. They may not learn how to read or to add, but they do learn that their political leaders view them as pawns in an elaborate scheme to remake society, and that the President and the federal courts are willing to sacrifice their education in order to reeducate their parents. And learning that, they also learn to view the federal government with increasing skepticism.

As the neighborhood school movement spreads across the country and local school systems throw off the chains of federal control, America may actually become the kind of country that the President claims he wants it to be: "An America that makes sure no future generation of our children will have to pay for our mistakes with the loss of their innocence."

—*Scott P. Richert*

NATIONAL REVIEW's First International Conservative Congress was a somber affair, as one conservative after another admitted that the tide of history had turned against them, not only here in the United States, but also in Britain, France, Italy, and Germany. Paradoxically, this is the best news to come out of the conservative mainstream in many years. What the cosponsors (the Heritage Foundation and the Claremont Institute) were thinking is anybody's guess, but the two-day affair was a victory for NR editor John O'Sullivan, who had the courage to face reality and the recklessness to invite such conservative émigrés as Samuel Francis and the editor of *Chronicles*.

Conversations overheard indicated a high level of dissatisfaction with O'Sullivan's decision to include discussions of trade and immigration, but as Sam Francis pointed out in his presentation, conservatives will continue to lose the Reagan Democrats as long as they pursue their dream of free trade and open borders.

Some of the performances were comically bad: ex-Reaganites telling us that all we have to do to "win one for the Gipper" is to parrot his slogans. Like the French Bourbons, who learned nothing and forgot nothing, the Reaganites, if they returned to power, would make the same mistakes that landed them in their current disconsolate exile. Steve Forbes, on the other hand, apparently knows how to learn from his mistakes. Instead of harping on the flat tax, Forbes touched upon a variety of social and moral issues that are clearly meant to be the core of his next campaign. For all his obvious drawbacks, Forbes may turn out to be a real contender for election in 2000.

The high point of the conference came near the beginning, in a polite face-off between Mr. O'Sullivan and William Kristol. The performance of Kristol *fils* disappointed even his warmest admirers—the speech was poorly written, weakly argued, and devoid of wit—while Mr. O'Sullivan pulled out all the stops. It was hard not to remember that O'Sullivan had been a speechwriter for Margaret Thatcher, while the editor of the *Weekly Standard* had written for Dan Quayle. As we go to press, the news is in that John O'Sullivan is no longer editor of *National Review*.

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EPICYCLES:

- Look for Vice President **Al Gore** to become the scapegoat in the Clinton administration's fundraising scandal. The Justice Department is closely examining his success at raising funds from Buddhist nuns, as well as any role he may have played in raising "soft money"—funds donated to the Democratic Party—which was used for "hard money" purposes, such as Clinton-Gore campaign commercials. Meanwhile, Janet Reno is quietly giving the all-clear signal to President Clinton. The proof of Gore's sacrificial status will come when Dick Gephart, Gore's main rival for the Democratic nomination in 2000, begins to defend Bill Clinton vigorously, instead of in his current halfhearted manner.

OBITER DICTA: This issue marks an important turning point in the history of *Chronicles* and The Rockford Institute. After 13 years of service as editor of *Chronicles*, **Thomas Fleming** has been elected president of The Rockford Institute by the board of directors. In addition to his new duties, Dr. Fleming will continue to serve as editor of *Chronicles*. The former president of The Rockford Institute, **Allan Carlson**, will head up a new nonprofit corporation—The Howard Center on Family, Religion, and Society—named in honor of educator and cultural critic John A. Howard. The Center on the Family in America and the Center on Religion and Society, formerly programs of The Rockford Institute, will compose the new Howard Center. Dr. **Harold O.J. Brown** and Dr. Carlson will contribute regular columns on religion and family issues to *Chronicles*.

Announcing Dr. Fleming's election as president of The Rockford Institute, board chairman **Norman McClelland** also declared the Institute's renewed and strengthened commitment to increasing the circulation and influence of *Chronicles*. Dr. Fleming described the board's action as "a great leap forward for *Chronicles*" and added that, under his leadership, the Institute would continue to administer the Ingersoll Prizes, organize conferences, provide speakers, and expand its newspaper editorial program, *Main Street Voices*. Through these means, the Institute will maintain its commitment to political and economic liberty, the traditional family, and the religious and cultural foundations of Western civilization.

Chronicles readers who are not already members of The Rockford Institute are urged to join. Further details about membership can be found on p. 15 of this issue. In addition, anyone who donates $1,000 or more by December 31 will become a Refounding Member of The Rockford Institute. For more information, please contact **Christopher Check**, executive vice president of The Rockford Institute, at 815-964-5053.

The poetry of **Timothy Murphy** from Fargo, North Dakota, returns to our pages this month. A collection of Mr. Murphy's verse, with a critical preface by Ingersoll Prize recipient Richard Wilbur, will be published next year by Story Line Press. Our artist this month is **Anna Mycek-Wodecki**, the art director of *Chronicles*. Her work has appeared in exhibitions in Warsaw, Paris, New York City, and, most recently, Rockford.

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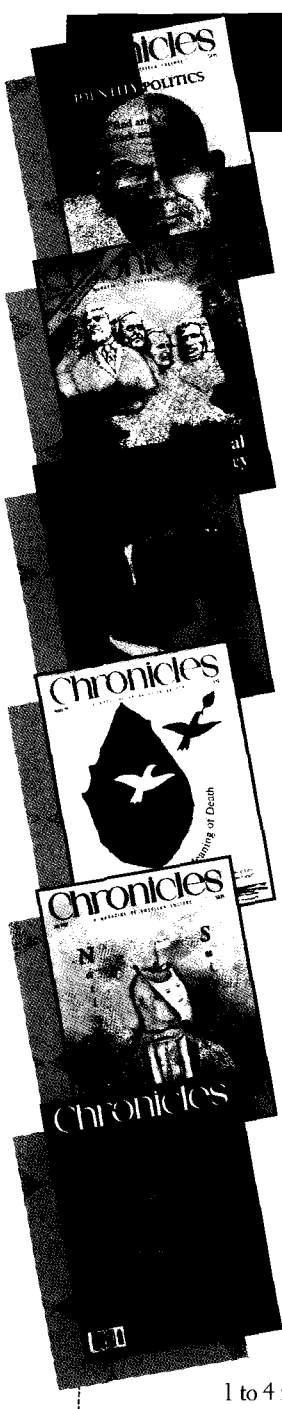
GREAT TOPICS—GREAT ISSUES



IDENTITY POLITICS—November 1997—Thomas Fleming on race as the American religion, Samuel Francis on the witch-hunts of Morris Dees, Jacob Neusner on secular Judaism, and Joseph Fallon on the politics of Hispanic identity. Plus Justin Raimondo on the black war on Asians in San Francisco, and Mark Tooley on the church burning hoax.

IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY—October 1997—Patrick J. Buchanan on Mr. Lincoln's War, Samuel Francis on the demise of checks and balances, Llewellyn Rockwell on executive branch evils, and Donald Livingston and Thomas Naylor on the *real* meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance. Plus Thomas Fleming on how Presidents became our masters.

EDUCATION AND THE AMERICAN ELITE—September 1997—John Lukacs says "To Hell With College," George Watson on elitism and its virtues, J.O. Tate on the reign of "red diaper" babies in academe, and Herb London on parietals past and present. Plus Richard Wilbur on good manners and good literature, and Scott Southworth on the forced funding of student radicalism.

THE MEANING OF DEATH—August 1997—Bill Kauffman on the costs of war, Michael Hill on things worth dying for, Allan Carlson on the new euthanasia pill, and Barry Baldwin on the case for capital punishment. Plus Frank Brownlow's review of *Alias Shakespeare* by Joseph Sobran and Justin Raimondo's report on George Soros.

NATIONAL SUICIDE—July 1997—Thomas Fleming on learning a lesson from the Czechs, Curtis Cate on the French debate over immigration, R.J. Stove on Pauline Hanson's influence in Australia, Justin Raimondo on the future of the Pacific Northwest, William Murchison on why Mexico lost Texas, and Gregory McNamee on the state of Native Americans.

MANIFEST DISASTER—June 1997—Thomas Fleming on the new imperialism, Samuel Francis on globalism and its consequences, Joseph Sobran on the case for anti-Americanism, Srdja Trifkovic on America's role in the Balkans, and James George Jatras on benevolent global hegemony. Plus Rajko Dolecek's Letter from Pale, and Justin Raimondo on David Horowitz and the ex-communist confessional.

UTOPIAS UNLIMITED—May 1997—Thomas Fleming on the world of W.S. Gilbert, Thomas Bertonneau on the death of science fiction, Jesse Walker on the cult of Philip K. Dick, and Scott P. Richert on the *X-Files*. Plus Samuel Francis reviews the latest biography of H.P. Lovecraft, and August Derleth's last editor recalls the founding of Arkham House.

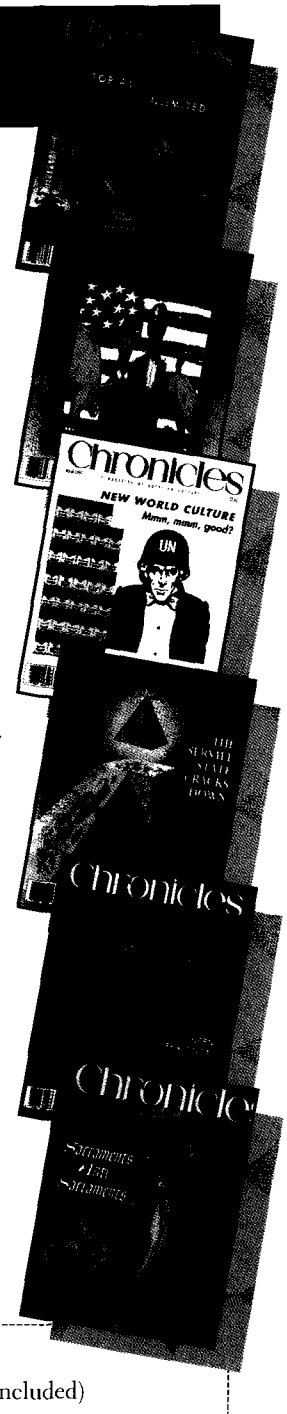
SQUEEZE PLAY: THE CONSERVATIVE MIDDLE—April 1997—Samuel Francis on the GOP flop, Mark Royden Winchell on paleoconservatism, George Watson on the strange friendship between conservatives and the free market, Martin Mawyer on the future of the Christian right, and Paul Gottfried on Martin Luther King as conservative hero.

NEW WORLD CULTURE: Mmm, mmm, good?—March 1997—Bill Kauffman on life on Planet Hollywood, David Hackett Fischer on multiculturalism's assault on scholarship, Jesse Walker on Ray Davies and the Kinks as localists, and Michael Hill on the New Reconstruction of the South. Plus former ambassador Frank Ruddy on "*Au Revoir*, Boutros."

THE SERVILE STATE CRACKS DOWN—February 1997—Thomas Fleming on why everybody gonna pay tax today, Samuel Francis on the new federal police state, Sarah J. McCarthy on why Uncle Sam is not trusted, and U.S. Congressman Don Manzullo on judicial taxation without representation.

HATE: OPEN SEASON ON HUNS, POLACKS, REDNECKS, WOPS, RUSSKIES, HUNKIES—January 1997—Paul Gottfried on Polonophobia, Ralph Raico on Nazifying the Germans, Michael Hill on the tar and feathering of the South, and Wayne Allensworth on the Russian Demon. Plus Margie Burns on "Southern White Trash" as a genre of film.

SACRAMENTS, ANTI-SACRAMENTS—December 1996—Thomas Fleming on Uncle Sam as the Anti-Christ, Father Ian Boyd on the sacraments as perceived by G.K. Chesterton and Muriel Spark, Harold O.J. Brown on the sacraments of death, and Philip Jenkins on teaching religion vs. religious teaching.



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Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Religious Rights and Wrongs

by Thomas Fleming

The Vice President was in Russia in September, trying to persuade Boris Yeltsin to amend legislation giving the Russian Orthodox Church a privileged position. Al Gore was just the man to explain religious toleration to the Russians. In the 1996 campaign, he revealed himself as an affirmative action fundraiser, willing to solicit donations from anyone, regardless of race, creed, national origin, or the laws of the United States.

The Russians were unmoved by American protests, arguing that other U.S. allies (e.g., Saudi Arabia and Israel) have established religions and pointing out that pluralism is not one of their religious traditions. Exasperated with Russian obtuseness, Gore told reporters that he had "tried very hard to explain exactly why we Americans feel so strongly about this."

How strongly Americans "feel" about religious toleration is not a question that can be easily answered. The usual arguments—that America was founded by people seeking freedom of conscience—is as big a lie as anything included in the National History Standards. Some of us came looking for gold or, more often, for free land; and those who did come for religious reasons were looking for some piece of ground where they could establish their own brand of piety as the exclusive creed. In the beginning, virtually every sect made as much trouble for religious rivals as it could. The Yankee Puritans were the most brutally intolerant, but even the Philadelphia Quakers, in their own style of passive-aggression, refused to take steps to protect the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who settled the Pennsylvania back country. If Indians went on a spree and wiped out a settlement, the Quakers blamed the Calvinists and defended the Indians as harmless children of nature. Maryland Catholics did tolerate Protestants, but that was a condition of their settlement.

The most significant movement toward pluralism was made in South Carolina, where an Anglican ruling class had to reckon with a numerous and well-organized Calvinist opposition. The balance in the colony then changed with the arrival of Huguenots from France. Although they were expected to join forces with their Calvinist brethren from Britain, the Huguenots had eaten their fill of religious strife and were content with the right to use a French version of the Book of Common Prayer.

Religious toleration was a kind of inevitable necessity imposed by life on the frontier. The constant threat of attacks by French and Spanish Catholics (to say nothing of Indian devil-worshipers) inspired a sense of camaraderie among Protestants which, in the Southern states, spilled over to include Catholics as well. The Hibernian Society established in Charleston at the end of the 18th century was a collaborative venture of Catholics and Orangemen, and Grady McWhiney has pointed out that many early Irish settlers were not Protestants but Catholics who, coming to a wilderness without priests, decided to make do with the other Irish religion.

If the spirit of toleration only took root in America by accident, it remains true that religious pluralism (at least since the edict of Milan) is a phenomenon peculiar to Western Europe (particularly Great Britain) and North America. It was not always so, of course. The English and Scots were excellent persecutors, and Henry VIII, lovable butcher that he was, burned Lutheran and Catholic with equal zest—the one for his heresy, the other for his treason. The English Civil War was the worst

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religious conflict between the 30 Years' War and the *Vendée* (when the revolutionary government in France waged a war of extermination against the Catholics). The English quit persecuting only when the ruling class, in the course of the 18th century, lost its faith.

If Puritans, Anglicans, and Baptists learned, almost by accident, to endure each other's presence in the New World, imperial Rome was a precursor of modern states that are tolerant by deliberate policy. Roman citizens were free to believe anything they liked and permitted to practice virtually any religion. The most notable exceptions to imperial multiculturalism were Druids, who performed human sacrifices, and the Christians whose enmity to the human race supposedly drove them to commit even viler abominations. The Empire was tolerant precisely because Rome was no longer the religious nation described by Polybius, who attributed her success to the ingrained piety of the Roman people. During their rise to greatness, Romans were severe against those who taught newfangled philosophies or took part in exotic cults, expelling the former and executing (on at least one famous occasion involving bacchanals) the latter.

True believers can never be entirely tolerant, and it was a sign of flagging enthusiasm rather than charity when American Protestants began thinking kindly of Catholics. The leftist answer to this sort of argument is an ironic shrug of the shoulders. For people like Christopher Hitchens, religious freedom is merely an excuse for dismantling Christian institutions—along with the other artifacts of the old order, such as good manners, respect for women, a sense of honor. Hitchens displayed his contempt for all these "feudal" remnants when he provided the color commentary for the funeral of Mother Teresa.

For many professed civil libertarians, freedom of religion is only a tactic. Their real object is the old Jacobin desire to found a new religion of anti-Christianity. The followers of Robespierre staged a bacchanalian festival of reason to inaugurate their worship of the Supreme Being (a god made in the image of the "incorruptible" leader himself). Here in Jacobin America, we have established a counter-Christian calendar. We celebrate the earth goddess during National Women's Month, pay homage to the proletariat on Labor Day, revere the state on le 4 juillet, and pay perpetual adoration to the ghost of the deified King.

More moderate civil libertarians—Girondists, Kerenskys, and country club Republicans—see religious freedom as an end in itself rather than as one phase in the revolution (which is what it is). Pete DuPont, appearing on C-SPAN, compared the Russian law to protectionism in the United States. I hope Governor DuPont never has to campaign in a Greek or Russian neighborhood; Orthodox voters might not appreciate the comparison of their religion to an aging rustbelt industry.

Most Americans are firmly convinced that everyone in the world is just like them, except for minor differences of hair-coloring and table manners. I have several times run into otherwise intelligent businessmen who thought that learning Russian would be a snap, because the only real obstacle was the Cyrillic alphabet. Governor DuPont naturally assumed that Russian clerics were as weak-kneed and defensive as an American Methodist and was shocked to discover that Russian Orthodox priests actually liked the idea of a church establishment.

No one, fundamentally, likes competition. We would all like to bet on a sure thing—a rigged wheel, a fixed race, inside information—and there is hardly a Christian church or sect that has not toyed with the idea of establishment: Anglicans and Puritans in Britain and America, Calvinists in Switzerland and Scotland, Lutherans in Germany (to say nothing of Orthodox and Catholic establishments). Smaller sects, even when they do not achieve political dominance, are sometimes more socially predominant than established churches: the Mormons in Utah are the most obvious example, but the Amish and Mennonites are subject to a strict, even oppressive, theocracy.

True believers can never be entirely tolerant, and it was a sign of flagging enthusiasm rather than charity when American Protestants began thinking kindly of Catholics.

According to Alain de Benoist and his followers, Christianity is inherently intolerant, always tending toward theocracy and persecution. So far as the clergy is concerned, Benoist is quite correct. Their church is their profession, and if they have any integrity, they are naturally inclined to eliminate not just heresies, but any challenge to the church's authority. The only honest motive for ecumenism is imperialism, the desire to gain some measure of control over the other fellow's church. The usual blather emanating from the World Council of Churches—about mutual trust, the common values and traditions of all Christians, etc.—is only a confession of impotence and infidelity. Some Orthodox leaders have tried to persuade their churches to secede from the WCC, and it will be a happy day for Christendom when they succeed.

But the church is not the only human institution with a divine mission. Political authority, as Paul and Luther were fond of reminding us, also derives from God, and the tension between Pope and Emperor, Patriarch and Czar, John Knox and the troublesome Scottish lords, is fundamental to a Christian order. Of course, every church likes to think it has the model system. Catholics condemn the Orthodox establishments as "Caesaropapism," while Protestants despise the Catholics as priest-ridden. (By the way, I don't know of any groups so priest-ridden as the servile followers of charismatic evangelical leaders.) But perfection is not to be sought here on earth, even in the far-flung provinces of the Kingdom of God that claim to represent the Church Universal.

The most that a cautious man might say is that we have the churches we deserve. Russian Orthodoxy is too brilliant and gaudy for our severe, Genevan taste—"caviar to the general"—but the Russian soul will never be nourished on law and gospel sermons and four-square hymns on a five-note scale. When the United States produces a Dostoyevsky or even a Rachmaninoff, it will be time for our clergy to go off on a raid to steal the Russian sheep.

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If God Ran the State Department

by D. George Leech

Anna Mycek Wodecki

"In the Name of the most Holy & undivided Trinity." Thus begins the Treaty of Paris (1783) by which Great Britain formally conceded the existence of the independent United States of America. This matter-of-fact invocation of the Triune God of Christianity stands in sharp contrast to the stirring tributes to human authority in the opening words of the documents usually cited as the foundations of the American republic: the Declaration of Independence ("When in the Course of human events . . . ") and our second, and theoretically our current, constitution ("We the People of the United States . . . "). In fact, as the deed to our national existence, the Treaty of Paris is arguably *the* American founding document. The fact that the Christian invocation was *pro forma* for the times says as much about the times as the principle: the United States took its place among the nations of the world as an explicitly Christian polity.

With the possible exceptions of Puritan New England and the incipient state of Deseret, the United States has never been a *theocracy* in the sense that the ecclesiastical establishment ruled the civil. But until recently, it was unarguably a *thearchy* since public authorities, at all levels, from the schoolmarm leading her students in the Lord's Prayer to the President and the Supreme Court, openly affirmed Christianity (in its Protestant iteration) as the uncontested ruling ethos. The herald of liberty, Patrick Henry, proclaimed: "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians, not on religions but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

D. George Leech writes from northern Virginia.

In sharp contrast to our current legal fictions, Justice Joseph Story, a preeminent expositor of our constitutional order (when we still had one), elucidated: "The real objective of the First Amendment was not to countenance, much less to advance, Mohammedanism, or Judaism, or infidelity, by prostrating Christianity, but to exclude rivalry among Christian sects, and to prevent any national ecclesiastical establishment patronage of the national government," and, in particular, to protect the then-established churches of several states. That a Christian America had an international mission was attested to by John Adams: "The destiny of America is to carry the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all men everywhere." Even as late as 1905, U.S. Supreme Court Justice David Josiah Brewer could state at Harvard University: "This Republic is classified among the Christian nations of the world. . . . We constantly speak of this Republic as a Christian nation—in fact, as the leading Christian nation of the world. The popular use of the term certainly has significance. It is not a mere creation of the imagination."

Today, in what Don Feder has rightly called Pagan America, such sentiments have only a quaint antiquarian significance; if uttered today, they would be offensive and subversive. The constitutionalism of Story and Brewer has long since given way to the lawlessness of Stevens and Breyer and their ilk. As if their conscious intent were to vex the shade of Justice Story, our judicial authorities act precisely to prostrate Christianity while giving official protection to pernicious cults that would have scandalized the Founding Fathers. The exemplar, of course, is the Supreme Court's extension of First Amendment protections to Afro-Caribbean animal sacrifices in *Church of The Lukumi Babalu Aye, Inc.* v. *City of Hialeah* (1993).

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The United States no longer prides itself on exporting ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; instead, as Irving Kristol has put it, "our missionaries live in Hollywood"—missionaries not of Christ, as John Adams had hoped, but of "a dominant secular hedonistic ethos. It is an imperium with a minimum of moral substance." As is true of our domestic policy, our globalist foreign policy reflects the values of a ruling pseudo-elite that is estranged not only from our country's Christian heritage but from the inarticulate and half-forgotten residue of that heritage among ordinary Americans. That is, the moral plunge of our international agenda from exporting the Gospel to exporting cash and condoms for the cooperative, sanctions and bombs for the recalcitrant, is inseparable from the progressive de-Christianization of American society and of the larger European civilization which gave it birth.

Recently, someone asked the not entirely rhetorical question in reference to what has long been called the "American experiment" in republican, "pluralistic" self-government: When can we say an experiment has failed? To answer that question, it is necessary to recall that in the long history of Christendom, republicanism has been the rare exception—and "pluralism," a modern marketing term for de-Christianization, was unknown. That a public religious establishment can exist while allowing a reasonable degree of toleration of private dissent was obvious to the premodern mind; Swift, speaking through the giant king of Brobdingnag, gave the classic justification for limited forbearance: "A man may be allowed to keep poisons in his closet, but not to vend them about for cordials."

It should be remembered that in the Roman Empire, the legalization of Christianity under Constantine after three centuries of persecution and the establishment of Christianity as the official religion under Theodosius the Great coincided with the culmination of the progressive evolution of the office of the emperor—originally, in theory, just the "first citizen" (*princeps*) of the Republic—into a true monarch. By the beginning of the fifth century, in both Rome and Constantinople the emperor was a visible icon of Christian thearchy, the divinely anointed successor of David and Solomon, ruler of the New Israel: in a word, king (*basileus*). The indissoluble symphony between crown and cross, state and church, *imperium* and *sacerdotium* was in turn adopted by the sub-Roman successor states established by the barbarians, as new peoples—Celt, German, Slav—adopted the Faith, along with many aspects of classical Greco-Roman culture, under the command of a Clovis or an Ethelbert, an Olaf or a Vladimir. (In keeping with Ephesians 3:14-15 and 5:20-33, the same derivative understanding sanctified authority on the family level in the form of patriarchy; as late as the 18th century, wives in England who killed their husbands suffered not hanging but burning, the penalty for traitors, since their crime was not just murder but "petty treason.")

In sum, the growth and consolidation of European Christian civilization took place in a context in which Christianity—in the form of an established church—was the exclusive public creed of states ruled by autocratic monarchs (invariably styled "defender of the faith") in consultation with—but not under the command of—such councils, senates, and so forth as tradition provided. It is during this millennium and a half before the ironically misnamed "Enlightenment" that the true Light, the Word Incarnate, became implanted in the European heart: the vestigial Christian consciousness in modern America and Europe is nothing less (and alas, nothing more) than the small change in copper left over from the moral gold bullion amassed during that time.

In contrast, modernity might best be defined as a rejection of divinely anointed, legitimate authorities in the world in favor of the moral nihilism that became intellectually respectable during the 18th century, received its fullest elaboration in the 19th, and achieved political dominance in the 20th. Today, not a single historically Christian country can truthfully claim to be a functional Christian society. On the state level, no government, whether nominally a republic or a monarchy (the latter being, in practice, a republic in ermine drag, where not even the monarch would claim that "the people" are not sovereign), would stake its legitimacy on the cross on its flag or would claim Christ as its ruler. The ideological assault on monarchy—first by democracy (*vox populi, vox dei*), then by socialism—is inextricably linked to the notion that God no longer rules the world, if He exists at all. (It is significant that the great revolutions of modern European history—English, French, Russian—each culminated in regicide, the national analog of deicide and patricide, an antisacrament, a blood sacrifice upon the altar of human self-will.) In due course, having killed, deposed, or emasculated our kings, and having intellectually expelled the Creator from His creation under the tutelage of Darwin, Marx, and Freud, it is hardly surprising that in recent decades our rebellion has now worked its way down to the family in the destruction of fatherhood: feminism as moral patricide.

> A Christian foreign policy would mean the end of foreign aid and, in general, the end of most officially approved meddling in other nations' business.

America, despite the best intentions and emphatic Christian aspirations of the Founders, has not been immune from this progression and in some respects has been its showcase. Perhaps the most *experimental* thing about the American experiment was the apparently unexamined assumption that a stable, Christian social order that reflected 14 centuries of Christian monarchy and church/state cooperation could be preserved and even strengthened under a political order explicitly based on then-current fantasies about the idealized civic virtues of pagan Greece and Rome. We thought we could declare every man to be his own king as well as his own pope, while under the guidance of a "natural aristocracy," the inherited moral and social order would not suffer. We were wrong. The progressive degeneration over the years from a confederal republic, to a federal democracy, to our current demagogic unitary state can be traced in the decline from Jefferson's apologetics for sansculottic obscenities in France, to the rule of King Mob under

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Jackson, to Lincoln's anti-constitutionalism, to Wilson's sanctimonious one-worldism, to the bush-league Bolshevism of Roosevelt and Johnson, and finally to the Gramscian prevarications of Bush, Clinton, and Gingrich.

It is specious to believe, as do many American Christians (particularly evangelicals), that the prevailing corruption has not seduced and degraded "the people" as badly as our rulers, and that the Humpty-Dumpty of Christian society can (and will) be reassembled by a political movement like the Moral Majority or the Christian Coalition. Sadly, there are more Americans who are depraved enough to vote for the kind of government we now have than there are who will vote against it. Just as unlikely is national salvation in the form of "revival," a new Great Awakening. Americans' Christianity has almost entirely lost its savor. Social regeneration cannot be expected from a few more group hugs for "reconciliation" by Promise Keepers, much less from "designer" megachurches specializing in "Christian aerobics" for yuppies or from the babbling, barking, and backflopping of the Toronto Airport Blessing, the Pensacola Outpouring, and the rest of the demonic "signs and wonders" deception.

But . . . *if* God has not irrevocably withdrawn His grace from our corrupted world, and if He were, by some miracle unforeseen and undeserved by us, to restore an American Christian society and the constitutional republic that the Founding Fathers envisioned and which, for however short a time, existed—what should be its place in the world? What should be its policy toward other nations?

One good place to start would be with the old John Birch Society slogan, an oldie but goodie: "U.S. out of the U.N., and the U.N. out of the U.S." Most American Christians, to the degree that they have any kind of spiritual compass, as well as many people who are anything but Christian, have an instinctive and valid mistrust of the growing threat that world government presents to American national sovereignty. A Christian America would cease its participation in the United Nations and throw that organization's headquarters out of New York; the U.N. Participation Act of 1947 should be repealed. As Saint Paul told the Athenians, God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26). That is, even though all men are of the same flesh, Holy Scripture suggests that each kindred, tongue, people, and nation has its foreordained place and time. That the United States has become Frank Nitti to the U.N.'s Al Capone, breaking the knees of any nation (or at least the relatively weak ones, like Iraq, Somalia, Haiti, or Serbia) so crass as to want to preserve its independence and pursue its sovereign interests should be particularly repugnant to us. A Christian America would zealously preserve its own sovereignty—trade, immigration, and citizenship policy would be restructured to protect, not break down, the American nation—and respect the sovereignty of other nations. We would seek, with nations as with individuals, to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith," as the Apostle writes.

A Christian foreign policy would mean the end of foreign aid and, in general, the end of most officially approved meddling in other nations' business. Congress should repeal the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act and abolish the Kennedy-era Agency for International Development and the Peace Corps. If we object—as we should—to the efforts by the Chinese government to buy the Clinton administration, why do we expect other countries to thank us when we use the National Endowment for Democracy, funded with tax dollars, to influence foreign elections and pick winners and losers, or when armed U.S. force embarks upon nonsensical "nation-building"? Why does our Gauleiter in Bosnia, Robert Gelbard, think he has the right to threaten Bosnian Serbs with the "most serious imaginable" consequences (more "serious" than the bombs and sanctions we have already inflicted on them?) unless they vote to ratify the leaders we have preselected for them? Why does the International Republican Institute conduct programs in Russia and Eastern Europe to encourage greater female participation in the political process, as if there is something inherently wrong with the traditional attitude (still stronger in the postcommunist world than in the West) that politics mostly concerns men and that women's major responsibility is the home? Most of what our money goes for is neither good nor Christian, and even if it were, there is no compelling reason why Americans should be taxed to pay for work that would be better done on a voluntary basis.

In general, an American Christian foreign policy that championed national sovereignty over internationalism would heed the long-neglected warning of George Washington against "permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others." At the same time, a sovereign, Christian America would take a realistic and principled attitude toward two issues that should provoke the conscience of any Christian people: persecution of Christians and the march of militant Islam.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord," sang the psalmist, "is the death of his saints." An amazed and stupefied Washington establishment has lately discovered the obvious fact that more Christians have suffered a martyr's fate in the 20th century than in the previous 19 combined. (As a side observation on the abysmal level of Christian knowledge and solidarity, how many American Christians now fond of citing this know that today most Christian victims of Islam are Roman Catholics, or that the vast majority of this century's horrendous communist death toll were Orthodox?) Typically, the bipartisan establishment has managed to trivialize even this belated awareness of Christian persecution and has relegated it to the generic status of "human rights," unwilling to show any particular concern for Christians without throwing in Tibetan Buddhists, Iranian Baha'is, Chinese Muslims, and anybody and everybody else to avoid even the suspicion that American Christians might be especially concerned about fellow Christians. An American Christian policy would bar or severely limit goods from persecuting states and keep our political contacts with persecuting regimes at appropriately minimal levels.

Similarly, the United States should reverse its pro-Muslim bias in the conflicts that currently rage between Muslims and Christians in the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and along the southern Sahara and extend toward the Christians what traditional diplomacy called "benevolent neutrality"; we should encourage the moral unity of traditionally Christian peoples and should abandon misguided policies, like NATO expansion and our Bosnia deployment, that promote disunity. It is not the job of even a Christian America to go to war to protect Christians abroad, but we should be in solidarity with, not hostile to, Christian communities that are increasingly subject to physical eradication by the devotees of a crazed false prophet.

Of all the items on the Christian Coalition's voters' guide, in

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all likelihood the only one never to be faulted by the ACLU or People for the American Way on the ground of church/state separation is the notion that American Christians have a *religious* obligation to insist on unqualified American support for the state of Israel. This is not to suggest that the United States could not justify a cooperative relationship with Israel purely on prudent foreign policy grounds, given the latter's antipathy toward Islamic radicalism. However, we should terminate Israel's peremptory claim to over four billion dollars in various forms of American assistance every year, the benefit of which even many Israelis are now questioning; the Cranston Amendment, for example, which requires that American annual aid to Israel be no less than Israel's annual interest payment on past loans, should be repealed. Likewise, it is natural and—if it were kept within certain limits—tolerable that American Jews would have an inclination to interpret Israel's interests as harmonious with America's, even as Americans of other ethno-religious stock maintain their emotional bond with their countries of origin.

But there is no justification for the conviction of so many American Christians, mostly evangelicals but including members of other denominations, that American support for a non-Christian foreign state is an *absolute* divine mandate. This superstition derives almost entirely from a novel—indeed, heretical—method of biblical exegesis called Dispensationalism, which holds, among other things, that the covenant given to Israel in the Old Testament continues to run concurrently with the New Covenant; in its extreme form, its adherents go so far as to suggest that there are in effect two paths of salvation, one for Jews and the other for Gentiles, a clear perversion of Scripture (especially Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans, chapters 9 through 11) and of any Christian teaching to be found from the first century to the 19th. Some Dispensationalists even expect in the not-too-distant future to hail the returned Christ in the guise of an earthly king and messiah ruling from a rebuilt Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem—and have provided moral and material support to a radical Israeli group called the Temple Mount Faithful, which has repeatedly provoked violent tensions in its campaign to rebuild the Temple destroyed by Titus in A.D. 70. For any serious Christian, especially one familiar with the writings of the Church Fathers, less important than the political consequences of a rebuilt temple (the site is now occupied by the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa mosque) or the Jewish religious significance of rebuilding the Temple (the last serious attempt to do so was under Julian the Apostate in the fourth century) is that there could be absolutely no doubt as to *who* will be the "Christ" ruling the earth from that Temple: "that man of sin . . . , the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God," as Saint Paul warned.

Of course, speculation as to how specific political events relate to the unfolding of the "mystery of iniquity" have no more proper place in setting policy than do those of Dispensationalism and should not bias American policy for or against either Israel or any other country. But as a purely religious question, the effect of Dispensationalism on American perceptions of world events deserves urgent and immediate examination by all American Christians.

Unfortunately, that examination is about as likely as the United States having a Christian foreign, or domestic, policy any time soon—or ever again. God gave the Christian world 15, maybe 16, good centuries after Constantine. We cannot expect Him to be so generous again.

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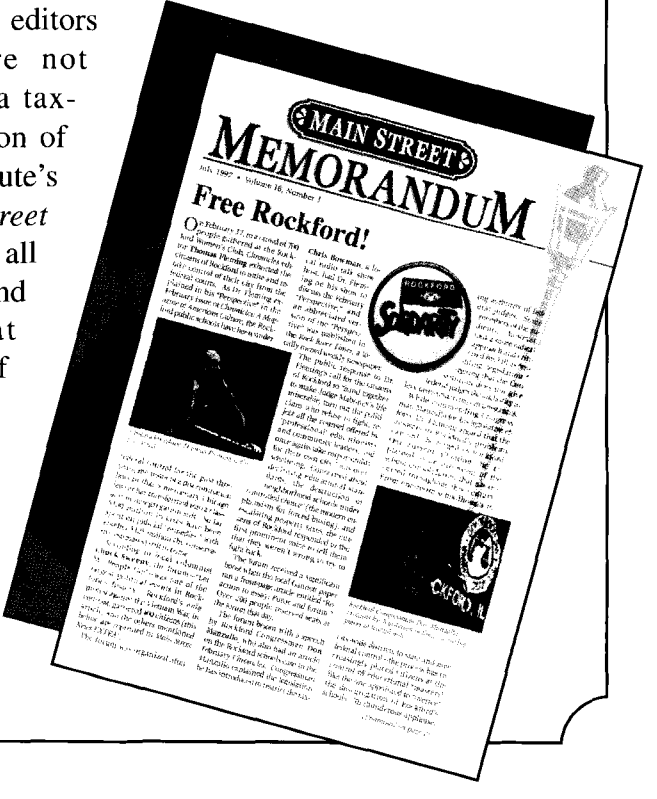

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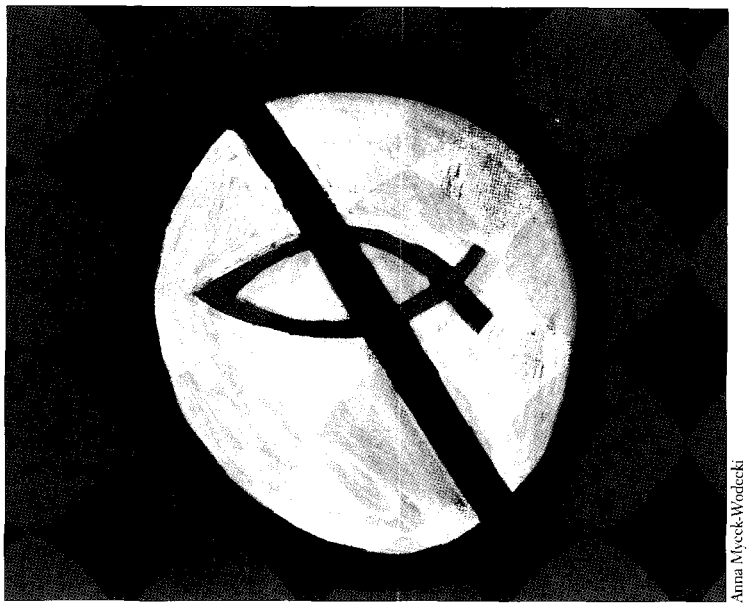
The Last Respectable Bias

by William A. Donohue



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

In this age of multiculturalism and sensitivity, there is one bigotry still tolerated: anti-Catholicism. As Arthur Schlesinger, Sr., Peter Viereck, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan have all observed, anti-Catholicism remains our nation's deepest bias, and the only one found respectable by intellectuals.

The anti-Catholicism that marked our nation's founding was directed at both individual Catholics and the institutional Church. Somewhat later, it became colored by an anti-Irish impulse; later still, anti-Irish sentiments gave way to bigotry against Eastern and Southern Europeans, most of whom were Catholic. And, of course, there was always the nativistic element expressed by the Know-Nothing Party and the Ku Klux Klan; their fondness for Catholics is well known.

Today's anti-Catholicism looks different but still bears that same odor: there is something basically un-American about the Catholic Church. Indeed, in a survey in the mid-90's commissioned by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, anti-Catholicism was found to be the nation's leading prejudice. To be specific, the sneaking suspicion that Catholics are trying to impose their views on society elevated anti-Catholicism to the top of the charts. Incidentally, the authors of the report never flagged this result but merely made a quiet notation of the conclusion.

Contemporary expressions of Catholic-bashing involve such serious issues as bugging a priest in the confessional, forcibly removing ashes from an employee's forehead on Ash Wednesday, beheading statues of Our Blessed Mother, villianizing Catholics for religious reasons (á la Louis Farrakhan), and displaying anti-Catholic art so vulgar and blasphemous that only a college campus would allow it. The role of the media should also not be discounted. Just consider the work of Disney, and of its subsidiary, ABC.

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The 1997 fall lineup for ABC included *Nothing Sacred*, a program of pure propaganda that depicts a politically correct priest, Father Ray. This priest doubts the existence of God, thinks of his vocation as merely a "job," violates his duties as a confessor, and instructs the faithful to disobey the Church's teachings on sexuality. But in the end Father Ray is really a good guy: unlike his heartless parishioners who are upset with the homeless for urinating in front of their church (they are heartless because they are loyal to the Church), Father Ray maintains his compassion. He operates a soup kitchen.

As we go to press, the Catholic League has mailed to Michael Eisner, chairman of Disney, the names of 500,000 persons who have signed a petition protesting the show and demanding its termination. Moreover, 20 companies—among them K-Mart, Ocean Spray, DuPont, Red Lobster, Benckiser, American Isuzu, AT&T, Sears, and Montgomery Ward—have all canceled their sponsorship of the show. Nor has the crusade against the program been an exclusively Catholic affair. Without solicitation, Protestant churches have made the petition available to their parishioners, and Jews and Muslims have also supported the drive. What the faithful of all stripes realize is that more is at stake than just a show that pushes the envelope against Catholics.

ABC's anti-Catholic bias was especially evident in its coverage of the funeral Mass for Mother Teresa. Anchor Peter Jennings allowed Christopher Hitchens of *Vanity Fair* and the *Nation* to rant and rave about Mother Teresa's alleged "false humility" and "rabid fundamentalism." Mother Teresa had one person who hated her, and the Disney-owned network found room for him to vent.

Hitchens is a notorious critic of Catholicism and the author of a slim book on Mother Teresa—infamous for its obscene title, absence of citations, and its hate-filled commentary. ABC was certainly well aware of all this when it invited him to speak, and to allow him to continue his diatribe against Mother Tere-

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sa during Holy Communion was unconscionable. Princess Diana had many detractors, yet none surfaced on television during the young woman's funeral.

Compare ABC's actions with those of NBC. When the latter's *Meet the Press* invited Hitchens to comment on the British royal family on September 7, it did not allow him to stay for the next segment on Mother Teresa; anchor Tim Russert handled the situation with professionalism.

Besides these more flagrant attempts to bash Catholicism, there is an underground current of anti-Catholicism that finds its way into virtually every nook and cranny of our society; its subtlety may be its most demonic element. Filmmakers are especially culpable. The recent remake of *The Saint* does not overtly deal with Roman Catholicism, yet it opens with a vicious portrayal of a Catholic priest. The movie *Face/Off* also has nothing to do with Catholicism, but it begins with a man dressed as a priest who dances like a stripper and then gropes a choirgirl; the film ends with a huge shoot-out in a Catholic church.

We are often told that Jenny McCarthy went to Catholic school. Why? Because her claim to fame is that she is a former Playmate of the Year and a host on MTV. In a news story regarding a wild night at a Nebraska nightclub, the reporter dutifully tells us that some of the young kids were Catholic. No doubt they were. A California newspaper was just as vigilant when it reported that a person involved in a car crash had "a sticker of the Virgin Mary on the steering wheel."

A major newsweekly recently ran a piece on delinquents which mentioned that, in one particular case, the kids went to Catholic schools; we can only guess where the other thugs went. An Oregon newspaper published a front-page story, complete with color photos, of a young Hispanic girl in her first Communion dress. The text of the story claimed that Holy Communion initiates Catholic children into "a culture of selflessness and devotion that, in some children, discourages individual striving," and concludes that "the results can be disastrous to education." One might reply that results like this can be disastrous to journalism, and to common sense as well.

Last May, two 15-year-olds, a boy and a girl, were arrested for the Central Park murder of a Manhattan man. The boy was described in the media as "an ex-altar boy," and the girl as having attended a Catholic school "run by the Jesuits." At the time of their arrest, both attended expensive preppy nonsectarian schools, but that did not matter: what mattered was the Catholic connection, however old. Had the boy been bar-mitzvahed, his former status would never have been noted and revealed.

James Hamilton of the *New York Observer* took a picture of Barbara Foster sitting on the lap of her husband, Michael. What was unusual about the picture was a) Mike's sex-mate and girlfriend, Letha Hadady, was standing next to the Fosters; and b) in the midst of the happy threesome was a prominent picture of the Madonna. The news story made it clear that the lovers were all Jewish, and so I called Mr. Hamilton for an explanation of the picture of Mary: he said it was just coincidental.

When an abortion clinic in Virginia was bombed last February, WJLA-TV in Washington, D.C., reported that the clinic was "down the street from a Catholic church." It was. It was also across the street from a palm reader's office, though that was not mentioned. Speaking of abortion clinics, why did the press constantly tell us that John Salvi, the deranged young man who went on a killing spree in two abortion clinics, was "obsessed" with Catholicism? How are these things measured, and why is Jack Kevorkian never described as "obsessed" with atheism?

The cover of the July issue of the *Texas Monthly* reads: "Abilene's House of Yahweh believes . . . Satan is a woman, the Pope is her puppet, and the world will end in three years." The story inside has nothing to do with any of this. Now, Catholics expect to be bashed in overtly anti-Catholic publications, such as those of Jack Chick. But in dog magazines? Yet that is exactly what happened when the *American Cocker* gave space to J. Michael Asbill. Mr. Asbill tells us that the reason the Church is against contraception is because it limits "the creation of more Catholics"; he also reveals how filthy rich the Catholic Church is. All this squeezed in between articles on dog breeding!

Moving up a notch, the *New Yorker* published an inane piece by Frank Gannon on "Pope Mobility." His attempt at satire is studded with such gems as "When you are infallible in the area of faith, you know how to pick an automobile," and "What does luxury mean to a man who decides what's right and wrong for most of the civilized world?" A question for Mr. Gannon: What is the purpose of saying "most"? And who is he to say that the uncivilized world within which he lives is not also under the tutelage of the Holy Father?

"They were few, lamentably few. A half-century ago, while their neighbors drew the shades and closed their ears, these few could not ignore what was happening to the Jews. They could not ignore the moral message of their Catholic faith." This is how the *Washington Post* opened a story on the honors that the U.S. Holocaust Museum bestowed on Catholics who rescued Jews during the holocaust. Naturally, Pius XII was noted for doing next to nothing to help the Jews, though at the time he received kudos from the World Jewish Congress, Golda Meir, Albert Einstein, Pinchas Lapide, the *New York Times*, and scores of others in the Jewish community (the chief rabbi in Rome even converted to Catholicism after the war and took the Pope's name as his baptismal name).

Professor Alfie Kohn does not like character education. In a piece for the *Phi Delta Kappan*, Kohn opines that "it is of no relevance that almost all of the leading proponents of character education are devout Catholics." Obviously this is not true, otherwise Kohn would not have mentioned it (and how does he measure devoutness—couldn't some of these guys be fakers?). Then he unloads with the clincher: "But it is entirely relevant that, in the shadows of their writings, there lurks the assumption that only religion can serve as the foundation of good character." Good going, Alfie, you nailed those Catholics and managed to keep your hands clean at the same time.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is generally known for its insanity, not its bigotry. But it proved its multiple skills when it took on Boys Town for experimenting with cats. Despite the fact that the National Institutes of Health found no merit whatsoever to the charge of animal abuse, PETA kept charging away. Worse, it alleged that Father Flanagan's famous home was also a den of pedophilia. After Boys Town and the Catholic League confronted PETA, it backed away from those charges, though it never had the decency to issue a public apology or to admit the truth about Boys Town's good record.

Chicago has a new nightclub called the "Convent." There are bartenders dressed as priests, waitresses dressed as Catholic

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schoolgirls, drinks called "Holy Water," and a "Hell Room" that sports a mirrored crucifix. The owners, two sisters from India, claim their gay establishment is not anti-Catholic.

When Dr. M.R.C. Greenwood was installed as the new chancellor of the University of California at Santa Cruz, the school embarked upon the customary binge of celebrations fit for a queen. For one month, the campus was alive with tributes to women of color, Jews, gays, Native Americans, Indonesians, Japanese, Chinese, Mexicans, and Filipinos. Indeed, a memorial prayer and meditation service for Jews was allowed at this state school. And for Catholics? They were treated to "Sisters of the Visitation," a play about a reckless young man and his servant who sneak into a convent dressed as a priest and nun, have secret trysts, and engage in "a hilarious comedy of errors as well as revelations about secret goings-on within the convent." This is what passes for diversity these days on college campuses.

When the Heaven's Gate cult was exposed, so was the take that many in the media have on religion. On *Nightline*, pictures of the Vatican were shown while introducing the subject of religious cults. On talk radio, Ron Kuby, who assisted the late William Kunstler, said there was no difference between believing that a spaceship was coming to save cult members and believing in the Immaculate Conception. Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz contrasted the cult's beliefs with a belief in angels. Best of all, however, was a cartoon concerning the cult that appeared in the Santa Barbara *News-Press*.

The cartoon showed a man clearly dressed as a Catholic priest who, while standing next to a coffin, invites everyone to a memorial service at a launch pad. I wrote to the paper and asked them to explain why a Catholic priest, as opposed to a Jewish rabbi or a Buddhist monk, was chosen to establish the link between the crazy cult and religion. I was told that "the minister" was "meant to be generic." Now it beats me how this priest suddenly became a generic minister, but that is probably due to the fact that I have yet to meet any "generic" ministers. Now that I know what they look like, I'm even more confused than before. Should I ever meet one, how will I know he is not a Catholic priest?

A similar situation occurred when I complained to the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* about gratuitously mentioning a priest who accidentally struck a girl with his car. I was told there was nothing to my concerns since the priest was an Episcopalian.

Why the cheap shots and what effect do they have? The Catholic Church is seen by today's elites as an antiquated, authoritarian, sexually repressive, imperialistic institution. Hence, the steady stream of cheap shots that occur on *Saturday Night Live*, in *MAD* magazine, on the Howard Stern show, and in countless other places. It is all about power, the power to chip away at the moral authority of the Catholic Church. Liberty without limits has already proven to be as false as it is deadly, but some people never learn.

It is not going to get much better, not for some time. The leading bigots are mostly decision-makers in our culture, and they do not see themselves as tainted with bias. The Church is not going to make the kinds of changes that Catholic malcontents want, and it surely is not going to do anything to please the bigots. But the smart money will bet on the Church—it has a track record for surviving and thriving that no other institution can match.

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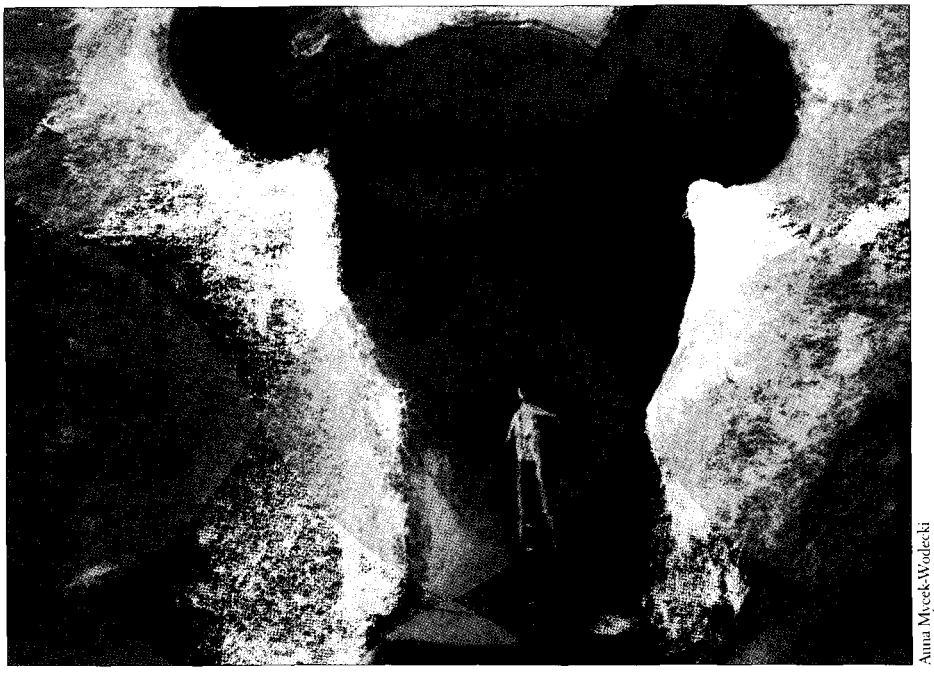
How the Market Stamps Out Evil

by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

In the year before the 1994 election, Ralph Reed announced that the Christian Coalition would broaden its focus. It would go beyond traditional social issues like abortion and school prayer and include economics. He made the case that the security of the American family, a central concern of any Christian political organization, is affected by far more than mere social issues. High taxes, for example, drain family bank accounts. Regulations destroy family businesses. Huge liabilities in the Social Security program threaten intergenerational relations.

True enough. And yet astute observers who read his essay in *Policy Review* had the feeling that there was an unstated subtext to this policy ecumenism. Would he use the new "broad focus" to water down the old social message? Would "economics" become a code word for moderation? Was this a prelude to full-scale political sellout? After all, it is far easier to make a coalition with establishment-oriented Republicans on issues like trade and petty business regulations than on tough issues like abortion and prayer. In time the suspicions of Reed's detractors proved correct: the Christian Coalition's political agenda was soon indistinguishable from Bob Dole's.

The headlong slide of the organization from outsider to insider status angered many grassroots activists. Why was Reed talking about a balanced budget when local schools were being gobbled up by a centralizing and statist Goals 2000 program? Why was Reed calling for the flat tax when local communities lack the political autonomy to keep abortionists at bay? Abolishing the Legal Services Corporation is a worthy goal, but how does it compare with the evil of tax-funded, blasphemous sex ed and art exhibits?

Reed's foray into the political mainstream—he eventually became a full-scale Republican politico—caused a gigantic backlash among Christian activists, even if it was not reported in the media. Organizations like the Family Research Council, headed by one-time Reagan aide Gary Bauer, vowed not to make the same mistake. What was that mistake? According to Bauer, it was Reed's attempt to draw the Coalition into economic battles. Instead, said Bauer, the FRC would stick to the key issues, which are social and cultural, not economic.

Over the last year, we have seen the rise of a new breed of Christian activist that will tolerate no discussion of economic issues from an economically informed perspective. Candidates who call for tax cuts or focus on the federal budget are seen as suspicious types who would distract us from key issues, all of which are moral and cultural. (What exactly a President can do constitutionally to shore up the nation's morals is always left unspecified.) It is no longer considered a conservative teaching that capitalism and Christianity can peacefully coexist. This is an alarming and self-defeating posture.

In truth, the Christian right drew the wrong lessons from the Reedian sellout. The trouble was not his attempt to bring economic concerns into the Christian political agenda. After all, in our century, American conservative Christian thinkers—from J. Gresham Machan to John Courtney Murray—have dealt with economic topics and arrived at generally free market conclusions. Reed's trouble was the subtext: economic issues should be used as a path to the political mainstream through ideological compromise. Reed's problem was the same problem that has afflicted every activist who has submerged princi-

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ple for power. The particular path he chose is a side issue.

It may take years to undo the ideological damage inflicted by the new right-wing tendency to run down the capitalist system. It is a bias that can be philosophically poisoning, since the subject matter of economics involves most everything our very lives depend on. It is not just about accounting and profit maximization. It is about whether fathers have profitable opportunities to provide for their families, whether we are prosperous enough to volunteer our time to charitable causes and our money to our local parish, and whether we can afford to rear and educate more than one or two children. As people involved in political battles, our choice is not whether to deal with economic topics, but whether we will take the time to take economics seriously.

As if to prove the point, Bauer's organization has concentrated its energies in the last year on two economic subjects. He threw himself into the battle over Social Security by exposing the idea of "privatization" for the Beltway scam that it is. If present payroll taxes are diverted to higher-interest earning accounts, a huge shortfall appears in the revenue stream that funds present recipients.

That is why every serious economist who favors "privatization" (Edward Gramlich, Laurence Kotlikoff, Sylvester Schieber, and Martin Feldstein) also favors a new round of tax hikes to "pay for" the transition. Bauer rightly pointed out what a disaster this would be for the American family; indeed, it is far better to leave the system as it is than to bail it out under a phony free market pretense. Here, Bauer's position makes more economic sense than the professional economists he is battling. For this, he deserves congratulations.

Bauer has also been outspoken in the debate over trade relations with China. But here, his economic views have tripped him up. He is in favor of a dramatic curtailing of imports from China and of new limits on investment there, thus escalating the situation into a virtual trade war with China over its "trade deficits" with the United States and over its persecution of Christians. He eventually allied himself with protectionist business interests and labor unions to deny China normal trading status. Yet, he has not acknowledged that China's economic reforms—toward the capitalism which the regime likes to call communism—have generated one of the greatest economic booms in human history, and dramatically changed the lives of the average Chinese family for the better. Taxes average a quarter of ours, and Christian missionaries operate openly, unlike in the Soviet Union or Mao's China. Even the Clintonesque one-child-per-family rule is cracking under the new prosperity. An essential part of that transformation has been the influence of international trade, which is all to the good. Both Americans and Chinese have greatly benefited from the economic relationship that Bauer wants to bring to an end through new taxes, which is what tariffs are, after all.

Through all these debates, Christian activists may have lost sight of why they are involved in politics to begin with. It is not simply to have a "voice" within the Republican Party. It is not to be recognized as a legitimate interest group by the media. It is not merely to "influence" legislation or to have veto power over this or that Republican nominee. These are all signs of political power, which may or may not be used for proper ends.

What is the proper end of Christian politics? Boiled down to its essence, it is this: to build and protect the institutional framework necessary for limiting the social effects of the tendency toward evil inherent in the nature of man since the Fall. The family and the church must be protected since their structure restrains evil and points toward the good. The state must be limited and kept at bay since the law too must obey moral norms; moreover, government is capable of imposing unmitigated evil on an entire society.

The world is filled with evil people with an insatiable desire to destroy. Many of them work in government. Many of them work in business. Of the two groups, which is most likely to succeed in imposing its malice on the rest of us? That should be clear: it is far better that an evil person be in business, which is always subject to the ultimate authority of the consuming public, than that he work for the state, which is subject to few if any constraints, and imposes its will by force.

That *should* be clear, but it is not. Even aside from the new anticapitalists of the Christian right, no institution comes in for a greater cultural flailing than the free market. From academic journals to the op-ed page, it is accused of every manner of cultural crime. It supposedly causes us to neglect the plight of the poor, to oppress women and minorities, to exalt greed above goodness, and to waste resources. The market is said to war against our natural sense of community, control our minds through advertising, wield socially destructive power by creating false wants, and dumb down our tastes in food, art, music, and literature.

Some of these criticisms reflect sheer ideological blindness. What the left considers oppression of official minorities (including, most recently, the insane) turns out to be the failure not to hire and promote them on grounds of race, sex, and disability. This is an argument against the very idea that merit should have something to do with social and economic status. It is not an argument against the market so much as against Natural Law. To the extent that we abolish hierarchy and authority in markets, they are replaced by subjugation to government. Other complaints against the free market reflect intellectual confusion, which traces every manner of social evil in our century to precisely the wrong cause: the market instead of government.

We have seen in this century an explosive expansion of government power, and the rise of tyrannies on a scale unimaginable in times past, with at least 100 million people murdered by government, not counting its wars. The U.S. government is the largest and most powerful—in terms of sheer resources and weapons at its disposal—in the history of the world. Its growth has come at the expense of the private economy, which a century and a half ago was extremely free of government control. Small businesses, corporations, and charitable organizations in every sector could operate and serve the public while paying little obeisance of any sort to the central government, or even state and local government.

During this same period of government growth, we have also witnessed a collapse in public morals, the fraying of community, the loss of a sense of the sacred, the public exaltation of debauchery, the collapse of learning, and the bankruptcy of art and culture generally. Can we discern a possible cause and effect for these trends? Is it really McDonald's and Wal-Mart, as symbols of free enterprise, that deserve our scorn, or the Leviathan state? Yet commercial society comes in for far more criticism from the intelligentsia than does government, despite its evident failures and destructions. (And let us not pretend there is some third choice between markets and govern-

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ment control.)

Before fleshing this out and considering its implications, consider my original question: Is it better for evil men to work in the private sector or to work for the government? Look at the deeds of two bad men: Michael Eisner and David Kessler. Eisner works in the private sector. He is the head of Disney, a company once synonymous with family entertainment. The Disney name served as an entertainment imprimatur at a time of great moral and cultural confusion. Walt Disney's cartoon characters were funny, his animations brilliant, and his theme parks spectacular experiments in the uses of private property.

Even at the height of Hollywood's studio system in the 1930's, Walt Disney's independently made movies succeeded because the sovereign consumer prevailed. But fast forward 60 years, and we see something radically different. Eisner's movies have not-so-secret subtexts that are politically correct at best and deeply malevolent at worst. Even more disturbing are the movies backed by Disney's subsidiaries, which include graphic sex, attacks on Christianity, and the basest possible celebrations of perversity. It is an appalling transformation.

But can we blame the market for this turn of events? Many have and do, but what it really illustrates is what we have always known: bad people can do bad things and stay within the law. The market, it has been noted many times, is a blank slate on which the consuming public scribbles its preferences; if people choose wrongly, it is the agents themselves who are at fault, not the mechanism that allowed them to make choices. Whatever a bad man wants to sell, he must find willing consumers to buy. The extent of his riches depends directly on the size of the market he successfully serves as well as his ability to serve that market without wasting social resources. These requirements alone make it more difficult for malice to thrive. The market also provides wide opportunities to beat back evil, and builds in institutional restraints that make it impossible for evil to flourish in a culture that resists it.

Eisner's profits can only come about through persuading his audience to shell out money for his projects. With the Disney name behind him, he enjoyed something close to a captive audience for many years. But after two or three animated movies began to turn off audiences, he began to lose their confidence. *Pocahontas* was a worse movie from a cultural point of view than *Hercules*, yet the latter did much worse at the box office.

Consumer surveys reported in the *New York Times* show that consumers poured in to see *Pocahontas* based on the belief that it was made in the true Disney tradition, but they were dismayed by its overtly pagan theme. *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* squandered even more moral capital, and consumers lost further confidence. *Hercules* was made to recoup this loss and rebuild the company's reputation, but by that time Disney was no longer trusted by much of the viewing audience. A money-making enterprise was turned into a relative loser, solely because the man behind it did not have the best interests of viewing families at heart. Some industry watchers have suggested that the animated film may have run its course; in any case, the Eisnerian variety probably has.

What can be done about purveyors of cheap, antireligious fare like *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, or Disney's baser productions? We could reconfigure the law to define more narrowly what is allowed to be shown in public. We could restrict the rights of property holders to sponsor a Gay Day. We could forbid the use of attractive cartoon characters designed to appeal to children for destructive purposes (this is what the left proposes do about Joe Camel, for example). Or we could take the free market path and say, if you do not like it, you do not have to consume it; you can even boycott it. To many conservatives, this sounds like throwing in the towel in the culture war or succumbing to moral nihilism, but the only option to market-based production and distribution is legal restriction.

There are good reasons why seeking legal restrictions on the public offering of evil, except at the most local level, is a bad idea. There is no way to write a law that would ensnare the most cunning peddlers of trash. The very enforcement of such laws introduces its own forms of corruption because it will always mean transferring power to government officials. Such laws can also backfire by creating a forbidden-fruit effect, especially in times where government is held in such low esteem. It sets a precedent whereby anyone who grabs hold of the reins of power has his way (if porn on the Internet is ever abolished, "hate speech" and antigovernment literature will be next in line, and the entire medium will become as politicized as the television networks). This is because power has no moral purpose of its own; it can be wielded with a range of intentions, few of them, in the long-run, in the "public interest."

Let us say we generally leave evil to flounder in the public square, allowing consumers to watch the heretical movie *Priest* if they so choose, while taking the risk that misguided consumers will actually pay money to go see a *Pocahontas* subvert the very basis of Western culture: man's domination of nature. What will happen? In reality, this *is* what happened: an astounding public backlash.

The Southern Baptists called a boycott of Disney. And despite the media's attempt to portray it as silly and troglodyte, it has had a devastating effect on Disney's image. Profits dropped, visits to Disney World shrank, sales of toys and figurines fell, and the boycott widened to ever more religious groups. The re-

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Eighty-Eight at Midnight

by Timothy Murphy

A black calf bleats
at shriveled teats.
Incessant heat
withers the wheat
and wilts the silking corn.
Too few, too late
the spotty showers
mock my stunted flowers.
Too late I shrink from debt.
Like a spitted calf I turn
over a bed of coals
while the pastures burn.

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actionaries had stood up to the progressives, and by sheer number and force of will, actually began to win. Disney is desperately, if quietly, trying to regroup, because if there is one thing an evil businessman wants more than the thrill of destruction, it is profit. That pursuit reins in his desires, and restricts the social effects of his malevolence.

Not so with government. Imagine if Michael Eisner were the head of a federal movie administration. The therapeutic movies funded by the FMA would not be subject to a market test. They would have ready funding and a truly captive audience, probably including every public school classroom. Eisner would be far freer to pursue his grudge against the public without restraint, so long as he could bamboozle his way through Senate confirmation hearings.

David Kessler did not even have to do that. As Food and Drug Administrator, Kessler enjoyed a degree of power unknown to any corporate kingpin. While Eisner may be chastened by public disapproval from time to time, Kessler could ignore public opinion, because he did not have to worry whether people will purchase his product. He attempted to smash the tobacco industry even though a third or more of the American public smokes cigarettes regularly or on occasion. His iron grip on the drug-approval process meant that untold tens of thousands suffer or die for lack of pain relief and cures. He could target any food or beverage company in the world and charge it with misleading its customers, thus driving its stock price to a fraction of what it should be, bankrupting stockholders on a whim.

These are the powers of an unchecked autocrat, and Kessler used them with profoundly destructive results. But who was Kessler subject to? Could consumers boycott him or influence his decisions? Not a chance; yet we were all forced to conform our buying habits to his dictates, which affect everyone in the country. Whatever Kessler wanted, Kessler got. In contrast, whatever Eisner wants is subject to a highly sensitive ratification process by the consuming public, and his fortunes can be reversed on our whim.

Evil exists in both the public and private sector, but there is a profound difference between government power and market power, and thus the power of evil to wreak social havoc. The popular music industry, for example, has been the enemy of decency and taste for decades. But in recent years, it has pushed matters over the top: rap music is the worst imaginable racket to appear in the history of recording technology, topped off by filthy lyrics celebrating behaviors lower than can be found in the animal kingdom. But it was the *market* that took the edge off: the largest seller of CDs in the country is Wal-Mart, and its buyers insist on clean cover art, no profanity, and no celebration of death and mayhem. As a result, parents have fallen in love with Wal-Mart's CD bins: they live up to their family-oriented market pitch, and profit as a result.

There is bitter irony in the complaints that the market economy has destroyed our aesthetic sense. The market, above all, deserves credit for having saved us from a series of malicious conspiracies. Earlier in our century, the same intellectual crowd that gave us socialism also gave us serialism in music, Dadaism in architecture and art, and demented plays at the theater. There was just one thing that these ambitious intellectuals overlooked: the public does not like the way the 12-tone row sounds, does not like wacky-looking buildings, and will not pay to have its sensibilities insulted at the theater. Despite decades of promotion, these art forms survive largely as a result of government subsidies. The market has never wavered in its preference for minimum standards of beauty and form over the nihilistic demands of the government-connected intelligentsia.

This is the basis on which music critics such as Paul Griffiths of the *New York Times* denounce the idea that "the market is all we need to determine what matters." To him, all that really matters is Schoenberg, and if he had his way, we would throw tonality into the dustbin of history. But to make that a reality within a market economy, we would all have to have lobotomies or live on heavy tranquilizers.

Still others have a different view: music went wrong in the 13th century with the advent of complex polyphony. How can we sort this out? How do we decide what kind music ought to be heard in a society that values freedom? We have done quite well with the market, which has managed to suppress the evil impulse to abolish tonality even while making medieval chant more widely available than at any time in history. If we had to depend on the government-backed concert hall for music education, tonality might have been wiped out by now, and with it the Western heritage of music. Thanks to recorded music, and the vigorous market for it, beauty in music survives, thrives, and has triumphed over evil.

The same is true in food. An evil crowd has insisted that people should eat only vegetables, pasta, bread, and rice. The cow comes in for special criticism because it wanders far and wide, letting off ozone-destroying methane gas, and eating far more than its fair share of grain. But this theory, promoted by the cultural elite, rejects the historical and physical reality that man and meat go together.

Despite a decade of pro-soybean propaganda, antimeat hysteria, and pro-veggie enthusiasm, meat continues to triumph in the marketplace. This is in no small part due to the much-derided institution of fast food, which continues to make a delicious meat-bread-vegetable package available to the masses of Americans for a very cheap price. So corrupt are the elites in some places, for example, that the only restaurants with the good sense to serve meat are fast-food joints. Say what you will about McDonald's, but it has kept vegetarianism at bay for decades. And those who think fast food is tacky can feel secure in the knowledge that the market also offers the widest variety of ready-to-eat meat from grocery stores and fancier restaurants than at anytime in history.

It is an old canard to denounce the greeting-card industry for manufacturing "Grandmother's Day," "Secretary's Day," and all the rest. But compare them with the holy days that government has invented for us: Veterans Day (read: War Day), Labor Day (read: Union Day), MLK Day (read: "Hand Over Your Wallet, Whitey" Day), and all the rest. It has been the greeting-card industry, together with the much derided "commercialism" of Christmas, that has helped keep traditional religious holidays alive even while the secular elites have attempted to banish them from public life.

The cultural critics of markets forget that there are mechanisms within the market economy that reward the good and punish the bad. The incentive to make contracts rewards promisekeeping and punishes people who go back on their word. Credit markets reward savers over spendthrifts, and make people who are present-oriented pay for their high-time preference in the form of higher interest, while punishing those who do not pay their bills by giving them a bad credit rating.

The profit system rewards those who use resources without

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waste and punishes those who do not. The market's very efficiency ensures that if evil suppliers find willing customers for their goods and services, they are not wasting social resources in the process. The job market encourages people to hone their skills and find a useful role in the division of labor, while punishing lounge lizards and freeloaders.

Government has done its best to hinder the workings of these market-based proddings towards virtue and goodness, of course. And to the extent that government intervention has expanded, so have the opportunities and payoffs of vice. Inflation punishes savers. Antidiscrimination law allows incompetence to thrive. Bankruptcy law allows improvident borrowers to steal from creditors. And all sorts of violations have weakened the protection of property owners from those who renege on their promises. Vice and big government have grown up together.

The welfare state reached a critical apex in the mid- to late-60's, when the New Deal dole was suddenly a mass phenomenon and lifetime "entitlement," not merely a temporary help. Freedom of association was abolished at the federal level. Coinciding with this was the rise of the youth culture (the exaltation of immaturity), the breakdown of the family, the public approval of lasciviousness, and the increase of crime. Without attempting to untangle complex questions of causation, there can be no question these trends are intertwined. The limits on the free market meant a reduction in the natural rewards for bourgeois socialization and the penalties for antisocial behavior.

Yet even today, a market for goodness and decency still exists, and it is a profitable one. Indeed, it is the market that is protecting us against the breakdown of social norms reinforced by government policy. For example, while Congress was debating controls on the Internet, the market for censorship was busy inventing ever more sophisticated programs, available at no charge or minimal charge, that filter out trash from the Web with varying degrees of rigor. Productions of Shakespeare became box office hits while Hollywood films glorifying evil were losing money. In a market economy, no capitalist or entrepreneur can be sure in his social or economic status, whether he intends well or not. Far better that evil people be subjected to the competitive climate of profit and loss, and be at the mercy of bourgeois society, than that they be handed the license that comes with government power.

Forcing the David Kesslers into the private sector will not abolish the evil in our midst; nothing can accomplish that goal, until the end of the world. But doing so would make it possible for society to control and marginalize and redirect their influence over the rest of us, just as we are struggling to do with the degenerate postmodern in control of Disney.

Conservative Christians need to reintroduce themselves to economic theory. If they do, they will rediscover what was once taken for granted: a society that keeps evil at bay also severely limits the ability of government to determine how we go about earning a living, to confiscate the fruits of our labors, and to regulate the growth of enterprise at home and abroad. The system of economics that flowers in the absence of an imperious state is capitalism; it also happens that capitalism—by compelling everyone who wants long-run material success to serve the common good—works against the unmitigated spread of evil. ◇

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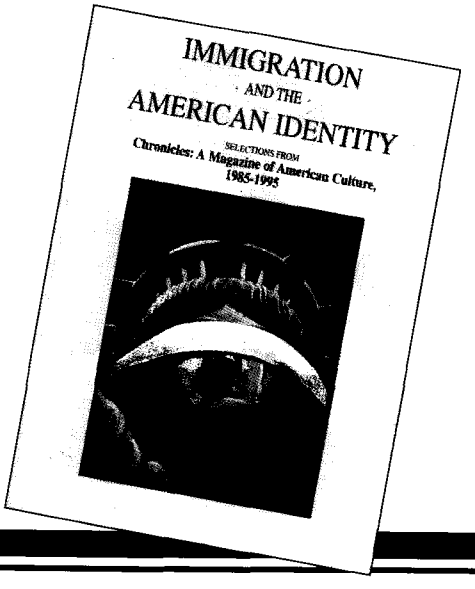

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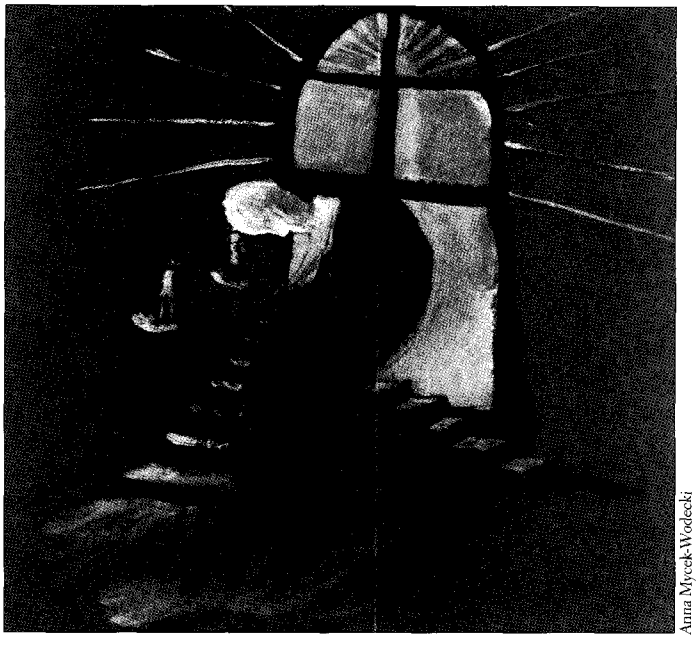
A Good Report

by Harold O. J. Brown



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Writing to Timothy, his younger brother in the faith, the Apostle Paul listed a number of attributes desirable in a bishop. His final admonition is this: "Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without [outside]: lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (I Timothy 3:7). In the United States of half a century ago, a good report was taken for granted for the clergy of all confessions and denominations. The entertainment media—and especially movies—generally portrayed the clergy in a favorable light, a bit naive, perhaps, but basically good. When the occasional rascal was portrayed, it was usually someone from the fringe, such as the mercenary evangelist of *Elmer Gantry* or the pompous missionary of Cole Porter's *Anything Goes*. Such Protestants were easy to attack, because Protestantism has so many splinter groups and independent operators; to portray a Roman Catholic priest or a Jewish rabbi in such a light would have been unthinkable, at least in the 1950's. Today it is easy to attack a priest, although rabbis still enjoy a certain immunity: lampooning a rabbi would probably be condemned as anti-Semitic.

Forty years ago, merely identifying oneself as a minister, priest, or rabbi was a virtual guarantee of respectful treatment, and perhaps of a discount in stores or even "professional courtesy" from doctors and dentists as well. In recent decades, with the rise of what Pitirim Sorokin called "colossalism" and "chaotic syncretism," the reputation of the clergy has suffered, sometimes justifiably so. Undoubtedly some of the most visible clergy are not good role models, but the pulpits are still filled with those who can and should be.

With the increasing presence of independent organizations and agencies not connected with "connectional" churches, it has become possible for a talented loner to achieve nationwide fame—or infamy. A few years ago we had a series of spectacular scandals involving three so-called "television evangelists," the "colossal" figures of Jim Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, and Billy James Hargis. Mainline Christians and evangelicals alike could shrug such things off on the grounds that these people were largely the religious equivalent of loose cannons or unguided missiles, and of course the Catholics, untouched, could say, "See what all this religious hoopla leads to!" More recently, however, the Roman Catholic fellowship has been shaken by some particularly odious sex scandals, involving supposedly celibate priests and minor boys. There is some reason to think that the sex scandals are blown out of proportion; nevertheless, that they occur at all detracts from the respect hitherto awarded Catholic priests by the general public and the media. The Episcopalians, not so sensitive as traditional Catholics and evangelical Protestants on sexual issues, have had a sticky financial mess on their hands, and even the black church gained media infamy when the head of the National Baptist Association, the Reverend Henry Lyon, was accused of both adultery and the misappropriation of hundreds of thousands of church dollars. The mass media, of course, now prefer to portray the clergy as hypocritical, ineffectual, and frequently immoral as well. But what the media do not point out is that for every priestly pederast or Baptist embezzler there are thousands of religious professionals who are living according to the precepts of Jesus and who really do deserve "a good report among them which are without." Of course the flagrant exceptions make for more spectacular news.

As the season approaches when Christians celebrate the coming of the Savior, it will be good to recognize that exceptions are exceptional, and instead of dwelling on spectacular failures, look at the role played by the majority of clergy in our somewhat compromised republic. From the early days of

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America, the parson—usually a Protestant minister, but after the mid-19th century often a Catholic priest—was the "person" in a small community: better educated than most and familiar with the skills necessary to bring men and women into contact with God. To have a son called to the ministry or the priesthood was a joy as well as an honor; the clergy—with the exception of some spectacular entrepreneurs—never earned as much as the two other learned professions, physicians and lawyers, but it was generally felt that they should not—and, indeed, that they did not—mind: after all, they were not in it for the money, but for the Lord. They gave a counterexample to the pursuit of profit that is so much a part of the American scene.

For the clergy of all the Christian denominations, it is generally expected that they will serve for the joy of serving and content themselves with relatively modest rewards in this earthly life. Although most clergy like to tell their parishioners, "Be imitators of Christ, not of me," and "Do as I say, not as I do," the fact remains that the clergy, as those who have publicly committed themselves to lifelong service, are taken as models. In most cases, they turn out to be decent models.

But should we expect them to be models? Should the lives of ordained clergy stand out as examples to be imitated? Should they live by higher standards than the general Christian public? With the exception of the vow of celibacy, which is peculiar to Roman Catholics, the Scripture commends the virtuous life to all Christians, indeed in a certain sense to all people, Christian or not, and does not enjoin on the clergy virtues that are superior to or different from what is expected of Christians in general.

But should religious leaders be held to a *higher* standard than run-of-the-mill Christians? Here views will differ. Roman Catholicism distinguishes the "secular" priesthood from the "religious" (members of a religious order); the very concept of secular priests suggests a certain measure of conformity to the world (except, of course, with respect to celibacy). In principle—with the exception noted—the answer is no. Jesus's words, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48), were addressed not to the inner circle of disciples—future preachers, evangelists, and bishops—but to the multitudes listening to his Sermon on the Mount. Nevertheless, the reality is that the shepherds are expected to lead the flocks by example as well as by precept, and indeed in spite of the occasional gross exception, they generally do so.

However, as Senator Lott says, "People are human," *errare humanum est*, and the standard of perfection remains an ideal, not an accomplishment. If there are no fast runners on the track, everyone will plod. Should those who believe they are called to follow Christ into a specific ministry make a greater effort and come closer to the ideal? Almost all of us will instinctively feel that they should, which is why we are more distressed with the moral failings of a minister than with those of a merchant.

There is a sound biblical warrant for thinking that the clergy should be models. The pattern Paul proposes to Timothy deserves imitation by all, but the Apostle to the Gentiles confined his recommendations at this point to those who "desire the office of a bishop," or, later in the same chapter, to deacons (in other words, to acknowledged spiritual leaders). The very first thing that is said of such leaders is that they must be *blameless* (I Timothy 3:2); the last admonition is to be of "good report to them that are without" (I Timothy 3:7).

The attributes Paul cites begin with "the husband of one wife." Of course, all believers are encouraged to marry and to be faithful in marriage. Paul has written elsewhere, "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (I Corinthians 7:2). When it comes to "bishops" and "elders," Paul is somewhat more precise: "the husband of one wife." Perhaps this means no polygamy, but it more likely means no divorce, and perhaps even no remarriage for widowers. Both Orthodox and Protestants encourage the marriage of their clergy. The Orthodox permit their priests only one marriage, and then, only before receiving holy orders. Even if a priest's wife dies, he may not remarry. The image is certainly of fidelity unto death, and even beyond. In today's climate of sexual libertinism, the ministry must be especially careful to set an example of sexual purity and marital fidelity. The exhortation was already there in the first century A.D., admittedly also a time of sexual licentiousness.

For the clergy of all the Christian denominations, it is generally expected that they will serve for the joy of serving and content themselves with relatively modest rewards in this earthly life.

Some of Paul's exhortations seem repetitive: "of good behavior," is paraphrased more than once. To good behavior he adds, "given to hospitality, apt to teach." One may think of the practice of both Luther and Calvin, engaging in "table talks" with young students while they were enjoying their hospitality. The "overseer" is not to be "given to wine . . . greedy of filthy lucre." In respect to alcohol, the clergy are held to a standard rather like that of the rulers in Proverbs 31:4-6. Some of our most noted "TV evangelists" may have been teetotalers, but they seem to have left the advice about greed of filthy lucre as unheeded as it once was by some Renaissance cardinals.

Who is to supply the role models for ordinary citizens in our generation? The days when college athletes were supposed to be clean living (perhaps even pious) and when even most professional athletes could be held up as moral models seem to have passed, and collegians as well as professionals now have a nose for "filthy lucre." The strains and temptations to which the clergy are exposed have not diminished, although the opportunities for "filthy lucre" have hardly expanded, at least not for most priests and ministers. To the extent that they are mindful of the words of Jesus, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15), they are not likely to become media sensations, but they may serve as an inspiration and example to those who know them best.

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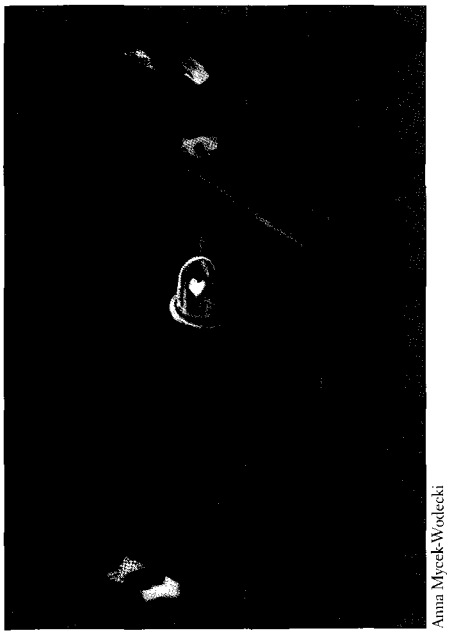
A Labor of Hate

by Justin Raimondo

"The man who loves other countries as much as his own stands on a level with the man who loves other women as much as he loves his own wife."
—Theodore Roosevelt



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

The Colonel: The Life and Legend of Robert R. McCormick, 1880-1955
by Richard Norton Smith
New York: Houghton Mifflin Co.; 597 pp., $35.00

◆

Hailed by the *New York Times* for showing that Colonel Robert McCormick, the legendary publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*, was "anti- just about everything, a man defined far more deeply by his loathings than by his loves," Richard Norton Smith's book is a massive attempt to smear, insult, ridicule, and ultimately vilify a man who, more than any other single figure, represents the Old Right in American politics. The *Times*' reviewer cites Smith's comment that "McCormick needed enemies, it seemed, the way most men need friends." But what does writing a 600-page book about a man he so obviously despises say about Smith's own need for hate? The author remarks in his prologue that "during McCormick's lifetime, profiles of him generally fell into two categories: rancorous and condescending." His own book manages to combine the two.

The paucity of biographical material on McCormick is perhaps due to the previous unavailability of his personal papers, which are in the possession of the Robert R. McCormick-Tribune Foundation, which inherited the bulk of the Colonel's estate. Until Smith's volume, there had been only two book-length biographies of this towering figure who—even his enemies admit—was a giant of a man. Imagine an attempt to marry the literary technique of *Finnegan's Wake* to the requirements of biography, and you have Frank Waldrop's *McCormick of Chicago: An Unconventional Portrait of a Controversial Figure* (1966), where any attempt to extract real information from the murk is problematic, at best. On an entirely different level, *The Colonel of Chicago* by Joseph Gies (1979) is a treasure-trove of information written in a clear, objective style; while not always agreeing with the Colonel's politics, Gies fairly presents the facts. The result is a book chock-full of the Colonel's own words, and generous quotes from *Tribune* editorials.

Smith denies us this pleasure: his book inundates us with authorial opinions, interpretations, and outrageous psychologizing. For all the author's pretensions to evenhandedness, the result is not a portrait, but a caricature. The Colonel, Smith tells us, was "regarded by millions of admirers as an ardent patriot and a fearless, if lonely, dissenter from the collectivist anthill. Slackjawed detractors viewed him with equal fervor as a prototypical reactionary whose defamatory skills endangered the very freedom of expression to which he devoted his life. Both camps were right yet neither grasped the complexities of this life-long maverick cum pillar of the establish-

Justin Raimondo is a senior fellow at the Center for Libertarian Studies and the author of Reclaiming the American Right: The Lost Legacy of the Conservative Movement.

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ment, whose *Tribune* reflected America as in a funhouse mirror."

How could both camps be right? Either McCormick was a fearless patriot or a danger to the Republic. Which is it? Furthermore, the charge of "endangering" freedom of expression confuses the victim of repression with its perpetrators: the Colonel's numerous enemies—FDR and the hardline New Dealers in his Cabinet, notably Harold Ickes—did everything they could to close down the *Tribune*, short of "sending in the Marines to occupy Tribune Tower," as Smith reports a few hundred pages later. He drops his Potemkin facade early on, describing the Colonel's life as "a one-man Age of Anxiety . . . [whose] phobias included, in no particular order, the New Deal; the Fair Deal; Prohibition; Wall Street; the United Nations . . . Huey Long . . . Henry Luce; Herbert Hoover ('the greatest state socialist in history'—before FDR); NATO; and cringing 'he-debutantes' in his country's foreign service who were more eager to curry favor with an exhausted British empire than to uphold the muscular nationalism of the Mississippi Valley."

Fashion in the art of biography is currently set by armchair psychologists, a development that obviates the need for any real understanding of, or feeling for, the subject on the part of his biographer. Smith's tome is suffused with quasi-Freudian psychobabble, uttered in the magisterial tone of the author-therapist. For example, he claims that the Colonel's "blustery self-regard hid a fearsome struggle between the classic narcissist's egocentricity and crippling feelings of inadequacy that dated to his earliest years as an unwanted substitute for his mother's lost baby girl." "Both qualities," he continues, "spilled over into the pages of the *Tribune*, which came to mirror not only the exaggerated pride felt by Chicagoans but also their inferiority complex as inhabitants of an overgrown prairie village, culturally and politically dwarfed by the hated, envied East. Thus a second son exemplified a second city. The Colonel wasn't Don Quixote but the Wizard of Oz."

The book is shot full of similarly pretentious prose, all calculated to characterize McCormick as a neurotic emotional cripple who had erased the line between pathology and politics. Smith demonizes McCormick's mother, the colorful Kate, attributing the Colonel's inability to love the U.N. to the unlovability of this acerbic woman, who supposedly preferred his older brother, Medill. In an effort to make her seem even worse than she probably was, Smith resorts to the kind of deception he might have attributed to Kate, by quoting from a letter from her, dated July 30, 1916 (the Colonel's birthday, which he spent in the trenches somewhere in France, weak and ill from dengue fever). "Poor Bertie," she writes, "Poor baby boy 36 with an old tart of 48 on his back. I suppose he is bored to death! Soldiering is not his profession." Smith gives the reader the impression that this letter was written to McCormick. The suspicious reader has to trudge through a poorly organized note section, placed inconveniently at the back of the book, before he discovers that a cruel mother is not writing to young Bertie, being shot at by Germans on his birthday, but rather mocking him, in a letter to *Medill*, for having had a scandalous affair with an older married woman—a fact that gives the quotation a different emotional coloring.

Smith conducts his vendetta against Kate at least partially on ideological grounds. He quotes a letter from her to the Colonel in which she excoriates him for not coming out strongly enough against the League of Nations: "Wobbling on the fence was not the way your grandfather made the *Trib* the great western voice for good that it was, but he was a man of stern morality and immovable convictions, and you and Joe are neither and the reading public knows it." Good old Kate! She rates a biography in her own right.

Even as a smear job and despite Smith's unprecedented access to the Colonel's papers, the book is a clumsy effort, rife with contradictions. For instance, after declaring that the Colonel had strong "authoritarian tendencies," Smith immediately launches into a long description of his career with the First Division, in which "his first and longest-running battle was with a military establishment that was disdainful of citizen soldiers." In battling against the establishment, not only in the army but back on the home front, the Colonel was obviously acting on the militant anti-authoritarianism central to his temperament and his politics.

A third of the way through *The Colonel*, the unrelenting sniping and condescending tone become practically unbearable. A physical description of the Colonel becomes a catalog of grotesquerie: the Colonel's "unnatural height," his "spaniel eyes" and "clipped, world-weary manner," all are grist for Smith's mill. The sheer stupidity of Smith's unending malice is enough to set the intelligent reader's teeth on edge. On McCormick's opposition to Prohibition, Smith avers that the Colonel's "reverence for the American Constitution never prevented him from cheerfully violating its Eighteenth Amendment." But surely, as an alleged "expert" on McCormick, Smith realizes that the Colonel considered the Prohibition amendment to be an unnatural and subversive encrustation on the original body of the Constitution—a view that, far from being a personal eccentricity, was widespread enough that the Prohibition amendment was soon repealed. More thickheaded still is Smith's inability to understand the Colonel's lifelong devotion to the memory of the First Division and his staunchly noninterventionist foreign policy stance. "Yet before he went to his grave, dressed in his faded World War I uniform, to the triumphant strains of 'Onward, Christian Soldiers,' McCormick had become the leading advocate of American diplomatic isolation and military retrenchment." This, to Smith, is paradoxical: a moment's thought might lead anyone else to conclude that, having seen the horror of war firsthand, the Colonel was not eager that others should have to endure it. As Joseph Gies points out in *The Colonel of Chicago*, while McCormick referred to his service in the First Division as "a priceless experience,"

> at the same time there was the disillusion, the sense of the futility of the slaughter, which he shared with the rest of the country. . . . [A]n antiwar, anti-European cynicism competed with a hangover romantic militarism . . . [and] slowly the first sentiment won ascendancy, with a universal agreement among all parties, old war hawks, old neutralists, and the new generation, that whatever the merits of the crusade to save the world for democracy, it had been a failure and should never, never be repeated.

Smith's obtuseness blinds him to the obvious. "[M]any readers [of the *Tribune*]," he writes, "found it understand-

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ably difficult to reconcile the Colonel's restraint toward foreign dictators with his constant harping on domestic tyranny." But there is nothing to reconcile. On the front page of the *Tribune* for September 21, 1943, one of McCormick's best political cartoonists, Carey Orr, vividly illustrated the Colonel's critique of the rising welfare-warfare state: "Dictators on the Home Front" depicts a glum-looking Uncle Sam locked in a stockade, representing the "regimentation of the American people"; standing beside him is a New Deal bureaucrat in spectacles, brandishing a set of keys and declaring, "Well, I've accomplished my main war objective!" This point was made in print—before, during, and after World War II—in countless *Tribune* editorials. Could Smith, the McCormick expert, possibly have missed it?

While duly reciting the facts, Smith fails adequately to describe the emotional and political atmosphere of the immediate prewar era, when the interventionist campaign to bring in the United States and save the British Empire reached fever pitch. He mentions, for example, that the *Tribune* "found space to print the isolationist creed of Lillian Gish as delivered to a Chicago rally in March 1941," and quotes a line from the Colonel's letter to the famed actress: "Few professional people dare antagonize the organized forces of the Colonials." He neglects to tell us that Miss Gish was soon forced to recant her creed, refrain from speaking at antiwar rallies, and resign her seat on the national committee of America First without making public the reason—namely, her inability to find work as a result of her antiwar activities, and a $60,000 contract offered on the condition that she disassociate herself from America First and cease her public speaking. He mentions the concerted effort by government agencies, in cooperation with British intelligence, to discredit leaders of the America First Committee, but does not go into any detail. While he recites the bare facts of FDR's continuing campaign to silence, censor, and ultimately put the *Tribune* on trial for "espionage," he fails to report the widespread support for such efforts among the opinion-making elites. When the *Tribune* revealed FDR's secret "Victory Plan," hatched long before Pearl Harbor, for a million-plus American "expeditionary force" to Europe, Smith tells us that the President's initial reaction was "to send Marines to occupy Tribune Tower," but fails to note that this act would have evoked cheers from the journalistic chorus. Reporting on a meeting of the Overseas Writers Association attended by several prominent government officials, *New York Daily News* columnist John O'Donnell quoted the advice of the assembled writers to their friends in high places: "Get him on his income tax, or the Mann Act. Hang him, shoot him or lock him up in a concentration camp" (*New York Daily News*, March 30, 1942). In late March 1942, a delegation of journalists (including George Seldes and William Shirer) met with Attorney General Francis Biddle and urged him to take action against the "copperhead" McCormick. Walter Winchell yapped that the *Tribune* was actively helping the Axis powers. The *Chicago Sun* ran an ad accusing McCormick of treason, and the Chicago chapter of Americans for Democratic Action put out a pamphlet echoing the charge, while adding a few of its own and calling for "all justified legal steps" to be taken against the *Tribune*. In failing to sketch the context of the Roosevelt administration's war against the Colonel, Smith abdicates his role as an historian. The result is that much of the urgency and drama of the duel between McCormick and the President is lost, and the text—just when it ought to become exciting—takes on a perfunctory air.

Smith is far too busy psychoanalyzing his subject to take the Colonel's ideas seriously: "His hatreds made him whole," writes Smith, in a typical passage. "They helped ward off depression, excuse his isolation, and keep him in the spotlight." In Smith's view, McCormick did not have any ideas worth examining at length, only "hatreds" whose expression explained the *Tribune*'s editorial line. Living before the invention of Prozac, the Colonel gave vent to a primitive substratum of thought that, for Smith and his liberal confrères, is beyond the pale.

Of course, the medicalization of right-wing politics is a classic smear technique first developed in Theodor Adorno's *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), a massive collaborative work that tried to demonstrate the psychopathological roots of "conservative-authoritarian" thought. Adorno and his associates diagnosed opponents of Franklin Roosevelt as afflicted by a "usurpation complex" and a deep unconscious fear that their parents were not their real family. Shorn of its Reichian-Marxist jargon, Adorno's work was taken up by the postwar defenders of the corporate liberal status quo, and applied to the "radical right" of the 1950's and early 60's. Sociologist Daniel Bell, in his 1962 essay "The Dispossessed," described the hard right as "outside the political pale, insofar as it refuses to accept the American consensus." Bell's essay later appeared in an anthology, *The New American Right* (1963). The unifying theme of the anthology was an examination of "the neglected socio-psychological elements in pseudo-conservatism," as Richard Hofstadter—inventor of the phrase "the paranoid style in American politics"—put it. Following Hofstadter's example, Smith employs "paranoid" to describe McCormick's opposition to the U.N., to the New Deal, and to British banking and other interests whose military and financial rescue was accomplished when America entered the war.

It may indicate a touch of right-wing "paranoia" on my part to note that Smith's sustained assault on the memory and legacy of Colonel McCormick was commissioned by officials of the Robert R. McCormick-Tribune Foundation, but it is worth mentioning just the same, if only as an ironic commentary on the tragic degeneration of a newspaper dynasty and the regional political culture it once championed. As the official biographer given full access not only to the Colonel's papers but to those of his family and to the corporate records of the *Tribune*, Smith was apparently intended to debunk, denounce, and delegitimize his subject beyond all redemption. In this he did not succeed: McCormick's vivid personality, and the natural appeal of his distinctively American brand of politics, shine through the murk of even Professor Smith's prose. One can only hope that some enterprising scholar will one day write the kind of biography the Colonel deserves, paying proper tribute to his bravery in the face of repression and his continuing influence on the course of American politics. In the files of the old *Tribune*, and in the life of its publisher, practically the whole story of the Old Right is contained: its plain-spoken populism, its distrust of the Old World, and its libertarian ferocity combined in the uncompromising fight against overwhelming odds. This is a story worth knowing and telling: one day it will be told.

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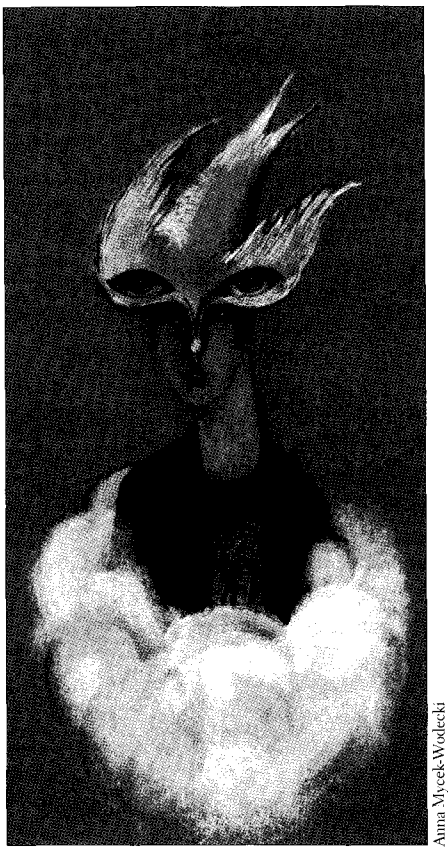
A Picturesque, Unprofitable Craft

by Mark Royden Winchell

"Poetry is the Devil's wine."
—St. Augustine



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

The Fox and I
by Charles Edward Eaton
Cranbury: Cornwall Books;
120 pp., $18.95

Rebel Angels: 25 Poets of the New Formalism
edited by Mark Jarman and David Mason
Brownsville: Storyline Press;
259 pp., $25.00

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In his prophetic poem "The Silence of the Poets," Dana Gioia imagines a time in the not too distant future when poetry will be a completely lost art. "A few observers voiced their mild regret / about another picturesque, unprofitable craft / that progress had irrevocably doomed." It will not be possible, however, to judge what we have lost. Out of pure nostalgia, a few old men might visit the abandoned libraries to run their hands across the spines of the neglected books; "but no one ever comes to read / or would know how." Like most visions of the future, the situation Gioia describes is an extrapolation based on present trends. If poetry once seemed central to civilization, it has now gone the way of opera and ballet, becoming the property of an insular subculture. Paradoxically, we live in a time when more poetry is being written and less of it read than in any previous era.

Part of the blame may lie with "advances" in entertainment technology. Today, Papa is likely to celebrate the children's hour not by reading Longfellow but by dropping a Disney tape into the VCR. Movies, television, and popular music now serve the function that poetry once served in society. Perhaps for that reason, so few contemporary poets even try to reach the mass audience enjoyed by Longfellow or Tennyson in the 19th century. But literary modernism itself may also have deliberately limited the audience for poetry even before popular entertainment began posing serious competition.

By design, high modernist poetry is difficult and elliptical. In purifying the dialect of the tribe, modernist poets abandoned a public language for a private vision. Although a poem must always be more than its paraphrasable prose content, there is a sense in which it must be understood at a prose level if it is to be appreciated at any level. Unlike instrumental music, poetry is composed of words as well as sounds. It is no accident that the last truly great American poet to be widely read was Robert Frost. Not only did Frost's verse retain a surface accessibility shunned by the high modernists, it adhered to a conventional prosody that made individual lines and phrases supremely memorable. According to his most famous critical aphorism, writing free verse is "like playing tennis without a net."

The publication of two recent volumes of poetry provides an occasion for pondering both the Frost legacy and the future of verse in America. The first is Charles Edward Eaton's 13th collection of poems, *The Fox and I*. Eaton studied with Frost at Harvard from 1938 to 1940, and the two remained friends for the rest of Frost's life. Eaton credits Frost with helping to launch his career, and his earliest poems seem to have been influenced by Frost's work. As his career progressed, however, Eaton began to sound less like Frost and more like Wallace Stevens. His later poems, particularly those in *The Fox and I*, are highly fused imaginative constructs, far removed from what Stevens called the "quotidian."

In the decades when American poetry was moving toward more open forms and more personal subject matter, Charles Edward Eaton maintained a loyalty to traditional forms and impersonal themes. Such steadfastness (some would say stagnation) is not characteristic of Eaton's generation of poets. Robert Lowell (who was a year younger than Eaton) began his career writing formal verse

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highly influenced by the Southern New Critics, only to adopt freer forms and more confessional content in his later and better known work. A similar development occurred in the verse of Robert Penn Warren, who was 11 years older than Eaton, and James Wright, who was 11 years younger. As Thomas Swiss noted in reviewing Eaton's *New and Selected Poems* (1987) for the *Sewanee Review*, Eaton "is more likely to write about art or animals than the people he has known. When he *does* write about people, it is usually in a generalized way. . . . His characters tend to be types, examples in the poem to explore ideas and themes ranging from asceticism to human greed and lust." Although sensuality is a frequent topic in Eaton's poems, it is a sensuality recollected in tranquillity.

The second poem in *The Fox and I*, "African Afternoons," is a typically Eatonian treatment of passion. The poem seems to compare a bored lover with a big-game hunter who has tired of his sport and longs only for "a time of lying down beneath the trees with nothing thrilling left to do." His woman, however, is like the lioness who will rise "golden, burnished, from the tallest grass," whether he wants her to or not. The African metaphor helps to convey the sense of conflict, danger, and exasperation that are all latent in the relationship of this man and woman. But the metaphor also distances us from an immediate apprehension of these emotions. An additional distance is effected by Eaton's reference to the lover in the second rather than the first person. Still, we think we understand what is going on, until we get to the last stanza where we discover that "you" is not a satiated hunter, after all, but "still the unfed cub who needs some practice as a lover."

Wallace Stevens' influence on Eaton's vision is evident in "Antinomies for Vulcan." The poem begins in the imperative mood:

> Put a bronze nude in a room
> that is red,
> Red walls, red rug, carnations
> on a table,
> So that it says to anyone too
> white of mind: Drop dead.

If Frost and Stevens have been obvious influences on Eaton's career, his identity as a Southerner suggests that he may also have been influenced by the Nashville Fugitives. He has written perceptively and sympathetically about Donald Davidson, while the style, tone, and diction of his verse bespeak an affinity with Allen Tate. Like the Fugitives, at least in their "New Critical" phase, Eaton seems to admire the metaphysical poet's use of the controlling metaphor. Often Eaton employs this device with grace and tact. (One thinks of his comparison of a porch swing and a Venetian gondola in "Front Porch Glider.") On occasion, however, the comparison will be so strained as to remind one of the metaphysical conceit at its worst. Eaton's equation of a redneck with a book, complete with ink for blood, falls into this category.

Because of his craftsmanship, his integrity, and his sheer productivity in a career that has spanned more than five decades, Charles Edward Eaton has earned the respect of fellow poets and the praise of thoughtful critics. He has won several prizes, and his work continues to appear in a wide variety of magazines, including *Chronicles*. At the same time, Eaton's virtues are not ones that are likely to attract a large audience for his verse or to expand the diminishing audience for poetry in general. Joseph Epstein once described W. Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* as "the best nineteenth-century novel written well into the twentieth century." Charles Edward Eaton may yet produce the best early modernist verse to be written well into the 21st century.

If American poetry is even to have a future in the 21st century, its direction is likely to be influenced by the contributors to *Rebel Angels: 25 Poets of the New Formalism*. The first question one might ask upon picking up this volume is: "What is *new* about the new formalism?" Even as free verse was coming to dominate American poetry in the years after World War II, a few older poets were continuing to write in traditional forms. In their preface to *Rebel Angels*, Mark Jarman and David Mason cite J.V. Cunningham, Anthony Hecht, Howard Nemerov, Richard Wilbur, X.J. Kennedy, and Mona Van Duyn. (One could add Charles Edward Eaton to the list.) If these paleoformalists are conservative in having held their ground against changing literary fashions, the younger *new* formalists are reactionary in having laid claim to an older patrimony. None of the 25 "rebel angels" was born before 1940, while the youngest (Rachel Wetzsteon) turns 30 this year. "Not only was the America they inhabited radically different from that of the 30's and 40's," write Jarman and Mason, "but the literature that surrounded them had few ties to tradition. . . . Young poets were schooled to be unschooled. Learning and artifice were regarded as politically suspect matters. American poetry had entered another romantic phase, like a late adolescence."

While the rebel angels are united by their use of formal prosody, they are too diverse in subject matter and sensibility to constitute a movement in the same sense that the Imaginists and Fugitives did. There are actually several different trends and impulses subsumed under the rubric of the new formalism. Poets such as Julia Alvarez and Marilyn Hacker might be classified as confessional poets who use traditional forms to convey very personal emotions. Even those new formalists who are not obviously autobiographical shun the indirection and reserve that we associate with modernist aesthetics. It would seem that no topic is too indecorous to be legislated out of poetry. Among those included in this volume are mastectomies, orgasms (both faked and real), oral sex, various communicable diseases, crucifixion, hemorrhoids, and flatulence. (Tom Disch's "The Rapist's Villanelle" may be the ultimate title of a new formalist poem.) In the verse of Raphael Campo and Marilyn Hacker, the homoerotic muse is in overdrive.

Along with the confessional formalists, one finds narrative poets such as Frederick Turner, Andrew Hudgins, Dana Gioia, Mary Jo Salter, and Sydney Lea. Although *Rebel Angels* is too crowded a volume to accommodate Turner's longer narratives (he is represented here by three short poems), the storytelling skills of the other narrativists are shown to good advantage. In "Saints and Strangers," Andrew Hudgins paints a surprisingly sympathetic portrait of an evangelist from the perspective of his daughter. (Hudgins has also written a book-length narrative treatment of the Civil War and its aftermath.) Dana Gioia's "Counting the Children," which was recently choreographed by a San Francisco dance company, tells the story of a Chinese-American accountant who stands outside his daughter's bedroom door contemplating "the loneliness that we call love." (The autobiographical expectation is so deeply ingrained in con-

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temporary poetry that readers often ask Gioia how old his daughter is now.) Sydney Lea's "The Feud" depicts a spat between neighbors, which escalates incrementally from farce to tragedy. Finally, in "Frost at Midnight," Mary Jo Salter has written an impressive blank verse character sketch of Robert Frost.

Tom Disch and R.S. Gwynn are probably the most conspicuous representatives of a third movement within the new formalism—the recovery of verse satire. Disch's "Zewhyexary," composed of couplets written in anapestic tetrameter, is a *tour de force* that takes us through the alphabet backwards: "Z is the Zenith from which we decline, / While Y is the Yelp as you're twisting your spine" all the way through to "A could be anything. A is unknown." (One can see why Disch is also an accomplished writer for children.) This is followed immediately by "A Bookmark," an English sonnet about the four-year tedium of trying to read Proust's masterwork. The poem concludes: "How I was looking forward to the day / I would be able to forgive, at last, / And to forget *Remembrance of Things Past*."

One of the most original poems in *Rebel Angels* is an inspired bit of plagiarism—R.S. Gwynn's "Approaching a Significant Birthday, He Peruses *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*." Gwynn has created a kind of verse collage by lifting famous lines from English poetry and arranging them so they come out in alternating rhymed quatrains of iambic pentameter. The final stanza conveys its general quality:

> Downward to darkness on
> extended wings,
> Break, break break, on thy
> cold gray stones, O sea,
> And tell sad stories of the death
> of kings,
> I do not think that they will sing
> to me.

Gwynn is good enough to redeem that most maligned of tropes, the pun. For example, the word "philistine" can refer to the peoples of ancient Philistia, who staged epic battles with the Hebrews throughout much of the Old Testament. But it can also mean a banal middle-class sensibility. In his poem "Among Philistines," Gwynn manages to have it both ways by telling the story of Samson and Delilah as if it were happening in our contemporary culture of *Action News*, tabloid exposés, and Hollywood blockbusters. The contrast between present-day vulgarity and ancient myth has been a staple of modern poetry since at least *The Waste Land*, but rarely has the point been made with such telling humor. Metrical form (again rhyming quatrains of iambic pentameter) is an ideal vehicle for Gwynn's wit. Consider, for example, the following lines:

> Her perfect breasts, her hips and
> slender waist
> Matchless among the centerfolds
> of Zion,
> Which summoned to his tongue
> the mingled taste
> Of honey oozing from the rotted
> lion.

In a sense, the effective pun is simply a telescoped instance of what the New Critics call the ambiguity of poetic language. We find another brilliant example of this device in Greg Williamson's "The Counterfeiter." On the surface, this poem describes a criminal artisan who prints fake money in his basement; however, the tale soon becomes a meditation on the nature of art itself. Although the perfection of the counterfeiter's craft would lie in complete anonymity, normal human vanity prompts him to include some signature mistake (e.g., reversing the flag above the White House roof) in every bill he prints. Given the connotative richness of his subject matter and controlling metaphor, the pun at the end of Williamson's second stanza seems natural and apt. Describing the counterfeiter's living quarters, he writes: "In the den, above two ebony giraffes, / Hangs the first dollar that he ever made."

A fourth tradition within the new formalism can be traced back to the redoubtable antiromantic Yvor Winters. Essentially a dualist, Winters insisted on both rational content and metrical form in poetry. According to Gerald Graff, Winters believed that "such devices as poetic meter, rhythm, and syntax are more than mere technical apparatus; they are a kind of spiritual grammar which, like a person's characteristic gestures and facial expressions, reflects his whole disposition toward the world. It followed from this that literary form is 'moral' in Winters's sense—a judgment as to how the world is to be understood and dealt with." The Winters legacy was passed on, in what Dana Gioia describes as a kind of apostolic succession, by J.V. Cunningham at Brandeis and by Donald Stanford at the *Southern Review*. Although the only representative of that legacy in *Rebel Angels* is Timothy Steele, one can find it to a notable degree in the work of two Southern poets not included in the anthology—David Middleton of Thibodaux, Louisiana, and the late John Finlay.

If people can be judged in part by the quality of their enemies, the new formalists have been particularly blessed. Diane Wakoski (author of "Dancing on the Grave of a Son of a Bitch" and other poems of feminist rage) has denounced them as un-American and Eurocentric for having renounced the free verse tradition of Whitman and Williams. (Does this mean that Longfellow and Frost were not real American poets?) In an attempt to infer political motives in the reversion to form, Wakoski sneers at "this new generation coming along which cannot deal with anxiety of any sort and thus wants a secure set of formulas and rules, whether it be for verse forms or how to cure the national deficit." Waxing apoplectic, she even calls John Hollander "Satan." This would seem to be the inside joke behind the title "Rebel Angels." One suspects that, unlike Satan's hordes in *Paradise Lost*, the new formalists are out to displace false gods.

Because of the sheer diversity of the new formalism, one need not endorse or reject it in its entirety. Those who find confessional poetry to be exhibitionist and self-regarding are not likely to think it any less so when it is written in meters. Some of the poems in *Rebel Angels* seem facile and trivial, and the selection of certain contributors appears to have been motivated more by affirmative action than by considerations of merit. A book of the same length that included the work of no more than a dozen poets would have allowed a more generous selection of the best neo-formalist verse. Even at its present dimensions, one questions giving more space to Marilyn Hacker than to Dana Gioia. Such quibbles notwithstanding, *Rebel Angles* is an important and valuable book. (Its index of verse forms also increases its usefulness as a textbook.) By once again making song and story central to the art of poetry, the new formalists are helping to restore that art to its ancient function. Those who care about the fate of our culture must secretly be of the devil's party.

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The Ghosts of Christmas Past

by Wayne Allensworth

The Battle for Christmas
by Stephen Nissenbaum
New York: Alfred A. Knopf;
319 pp., $30.00

"Now in history," wrote Chesterton, "there is no Revolution that is not a Restoration." A collective memory, a vague but compelling collection of shadows that bind us to the past, seems to whisper a perennial, bittersweet hymn to the numbed ear of man, particularly modern man. Every nation, tribe, or clan has passed on tales of a golden past to its children, transmitted by priests, village elders, and prophets of restoration. But in the modern age, as Chesterton warned us, we are forced "to ask for new things because we are not allowed to ask for old things." Nevertheless, whatever new things we come up with, artificial though they may be, are manifestations of the perennial longing for a restoration of a harmony sensed, but never clearly perceived, since the Fall. It is the desire for such a restoration that drives the "battle for Christmas."

As Stephen Nissenbaum relates in this study of the evolution of the Christmas holiday, "It was only in the fourth century that the Church officially decided to observe Christmas on December 25." The Church, it appears, chose the date "not for religious reasons" but because it marked the "approximate arrival of the winter solstice"; an event, as Mr. Nissenbaum notes, "that was celebrated long before the advent of Christianity." The first "battle for Christmas" was on.

The Church's goal was to harmonize the Church calendar with a natural rhythm of existence that made the period of late fall through the new year a time of feasting and rest in an agricultural society. The harvest was in, the libations that would quench the thirst of the feasters ready, and the yeoman farmer, peasant, serf, or slave indulged in the consumption of a rare festive meal of fresh meat. While rejecting the pagan Saturnalia, the Church wisely adapted itself to a seasonal, rhythmic existence of work and rest, feast and worship that was, after all, ordained by the Creator of the seasons (and of the Sabbath) Himself.

The adaptation of the Christian calendar to the winter festival was an effort to absorb and transform the pagan carnival, itself a reflection (though a distorted one in the eyes of these early Christians) of man's natural role within a created world that God had deemed worth saving. The Puritans outlawed the "keeping of Christmas" because of its "un-Scriptural" nature, its association with paganism, and the lingering insistence by many common folk on an extended festive bout of heavy drinking and what were once known as "sins of the flesh." But even the austere tribe of Increase Mather adapted the seasonal feast (Thanksgiving) to their dignified, if grim, version of Christianity.

Elements of the carnival lingered on as they do to this day (the New Year's Eve party, for instance), despite the efforts of Christians to coopt the Saturnalia; but certain of its aspects, as Mr. Nissenbaum points out, served social purposes that the Church Fathers probably saw as necessary, and unrelated to paganism. Wassailing, the European and early American tradition of a face-to-face exchange of gifts (a song for the best that could be offered in beer, whiskey, or food) between the rich and the poor, artisan and apprentice, or master and slave, appears to have satisfied some urgent need within the participants to demonstrate mutual good will and reciprocity, to affirm status (often by reversing it, with the servant taking on the role of the landlord, the apprentice that of the artisan, or the slave that of the master), while confirming function and purpose.

Mr. Nissenbaum is inclined to highlight the role that the winter carnival gift exchange played in cementing an exploitive feudal social order which prevented social upheaval. The lower orders, it appears, were constantly attempting to extend the "Holyday" into or beyond the "twelve days of Christmas" and push the limits of acceptable rowdiness and misrule, even as landlords and priests attempted to rein in their sometimes aggressive and destructive behavior. Still, he does recognize that something valuable was lost in the transition made by the Western world from feudalism to industrial capitalism and centralized, bureaucratic government.

The modern, "domestic" Christmas centers on Dutch and German practices borrowed and promoted by the aristocratic Knickerbocker set of early 19th-century New York: an example of what historians call "invented traditions." Mr. Nissenbaum convincingly demonstrates that the Christmas festival of Santa Claus, Christmas trees, and a transformed gift exchange (from parents to dependent children, later among friends and extended family) developed as a countermeasure to modernity's erosion of community. The industrialization of the Northeast had transformed social relations by eliminating seasonal rhythm, the uncertainty of status, and the loss of opportunities for "face-to-face" expressions of good will in a rapidly urbanizing environment. Members of the "lonely crowd" simply did not know who or what they were, or what purpose they served in a society that was beginning to regard its citizens as expendable cogs in a perpetual motion machine called "the economy." The wassailing of the seasonal festival had degenerated into mob behavior by a displaced proletariat, the gift exchange being marked by aggressive begging that bordered on mugging.

The industrialist or mass-scale merchant was not the head of a community bound by reciprocity and a sense of place. He did not claim—as the head of the household, the landlord, the master, or the artisan did—that his dependents enjoyed the entitlements of an extended family that promised mutual aid and assured function and status for all its members. During the 19th century, demands that the state mandate and enforce vacation days, working hours, and holidays were strongest in New England, at that time the most heavily industrialized region of the United States. "In other words, Washington's birthday was not afforded legal recognition simply for 'patriotic' reasons, nor was Christmas afforded that recognition simply out of 'religious' considerations." The "battle for Christ-

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mas" was being fought in union halls and in state legislatures.

Ironically, efforts by reformers to "domesticate" Christmas, to make "keeping Christmas" something one did at home in the company of a few close friends and family members, or to accentuate the Nativity of Christ as the center of the festival (eventually displacing Easter as the central event of the Christian calendar and giving consumerism an advantage over Christianity), were themselves coopted by the new socioeconomic order. The emerging consumerism of the era undermined the exchange of good will and the affirmation of status through role reversal in the exchange between Santa Claus and child (gift and affection for good behavior, gratitude, and reciprocal love). As production was separated from the household, and goods, services, and a variety of foodstuffs became readily available to the expanding urban middle class in 19th-century America, the "specialness" of the Christmas gift was transformed into the frustrating search for the "right gift." The problem of what to give the man, woman, or child who "has everything"—and often appreciates nothing—was built into capitalism and the "domestic Christmas" from the beginning. "Affection's gift" had become a commercial present, aggressively marketed by commercial interests promoting the "domestic Christmas." "Christmas," writes Mr. Nissenbaum, "was consciously used by entrepreneurs as an agent of commercialization, an instrument with which to enmesh Americans in a web of consumer capitalism."

In this way the yearning for an unfulfilled domesticity, for the genuine affection and warmth so often subtly tied to mutual aid and reciprocity, contributed to the "accumulative, competitive" ideology that produces the familiar "Blue Christmas" mood. "The problems we associate with Christmas, in particular—the loss of authenticity, the decline of pure domestic felicity into an exhausting and often frustrating round of shopping for the perfect gifts—are the very problems we most easily associate with the facts of modern economic life, with advanced technologies of production and marketing." The intensity of feeling for the domestic Christmas traditions was itself indicative of the need to "keep hidden from view" the relationship between an eroded sense of community and commercialism, "to protect children (and adults, too) from understanding something troublesome about the world they were making." The secularized anti-Christian bias was present in embryonic form at the creation of industrial America, owing in part to consumerism and the rise of telescopic philanthropy, both of which are part of liberal capitalism's genetic code. In an era marked by the collapse of family life and community, such "protection [from the truth] may be an indulgence we can no longer afford." Putting Christ back into this Christmas may be the biggest battle of all.

Wayne Allensworth writes from Purcellville, Virginia.

A Life in Themes

by Frank Brownlow

W.B. Yeats: A Life. Vol. I: The Apprentice Mage, 1865-1914
by R.F. Foster
Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press; 704 pp., $35.00

◆

By any assessment, W.B. Yeats was an extraordinary man who led a more active and varied life than most poets. As R.F. Foster says, he was "a poetic genius who was also, both serially and simultaneously, a playwright, journalist, occultist, apprentice politician, revolutionary, stage-manager, diner-out, dedicated friend, confidant and lover of some of the most interesting people of his day." He was also a gifted self-publicist who throve on opposition and defiance. Such a life leaves behind a mass of material for a biographer to manage. There is a large cast of characters to be depicted. There are many settings to be described and understood, and many journeys to be traced. There are issues to be explained and quarrels to be adjudicated. Above all, there is justice to be done to the man himself, and to his achievement. Otherwise, why write another biography?—not a trivial question, as it turns out.

R.F. Foster is a successful Irish professor of history now teaching at Oxford, where he is Carroll Professor of Irish History and a fellow of Hertford College. This is the first volume of his biography of Yeats, taking Yeats from birth to the verge of World War I, when he was nearly 50 years old. Foster tells us in his introduction that he has written a historian's biography, not a literary critic's. The difference, as he explains it, is that a literary biographer would begin from Yeats's poetry and devote himself to looking for its causes and reflections in the poet's life, while the historian would simply begin at the beginning and work forward, treating the poetry as one of the many things Yeats did. Chronology is everything; and, as things turn out, the beauty of that principle from a critically-minded biographer's point of view is that it so effectively dismantles the poet's own carefully spliced and edited accounts of his life. To give an example everyone familiar with Yeats's poetry will recognize: Maud Gonne, as she appears in Yeats's

The Sage Hen

(for Katherine V. Murphy)

by Timothy Murphy

To slake her fledglings' thirst
she dowsed her downy breast
and flew through blowing dust
from the river to her nest.

Now she is distressed,
always dreading the worst
for the flighty brood she nursed
because we do not nest.

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writing, was a tragic beauty. Loving her reflected favorably on Yeats's own sensitivity, on his fineness of perception, and on his capacity for suffering and endurance. In contrast, Foster's chronologically described Gonne is, not to mince words, an unstable crackpot whom only a rather peculiar man could have loved so ineffectively for so long.

In a book in which many people believe and do strange things, Maud Gonne did some of the strangest of all. She attempted to reincarnate a dead child by coupling with her French lover on the dead child's grave. Later on, having long protested her dislike of sex to Yeats, she married a known Irish terrorist who abused her and her young daughter. Yeats, who knew nothing about the French lover's existence, misread her completely. Lines from his early poems about her—"Tread softly, for you tread on my dreams"—hardly survive knowledge of the real Maud Gonne.

Foster writes so demurely, in such a plain, almost colorless style, that it is hard to know (especially with a whole volume to come), whether the book's debunking effect is intentional or whether it simply goes with the approach. Whatever the cause, the effect is certainly there. Very little escapes. Yeats's maternal relations in Sligo, much romanticized in his own autobiographical writings, appear as a race of narrow-minded, provincial businessmen. What is more, they were English. His father's relatives are presented as seedy hangers-on of the governing ascendancy, a pattern continued in the life of Yeats senior—an unsuccessful artist with a gift for sponging.

As for Yeats himself, Foster shows him developing early on as a man with a foot in both Ireland and England, adept at playing off one against the other to develop his career. Yeats deployed the cosmopolitanism of London against the provincialism and back-biting of Ireland, the romance of Ireland against the prosaic modernity of England. To the English, he was an exotic outsider, bringing Celtic mystery to mundane London; to the Irish, he was the homeboy with overseas backing whom everyone could be proud of, and no one could quite trust.

Presented in this way, and despite Yeats's genius and obvious charm, his life is the story of a man not easy to like. Foster's Yeats was a self-dramatizing, ruthlessly effective snob, a manipulator of people and circumstances who continually revised and rewrote his work and his life to align both with changing assessments of his position. Not that the story is uninteresting. In the lives of Yeats and his friends, politics, nationalism, occultism, art, and sex combined in a pungent mixture, with results ranging from the appalling to the farcical. In that respect, Yeats's Anglo-Ireland was a microcosm of modern Europe and America, but as one reflects upon the sinister mixture of occultism and nationalism in Yeats's circle, there is no denying that Yeats's poetry begins to lose its authority.

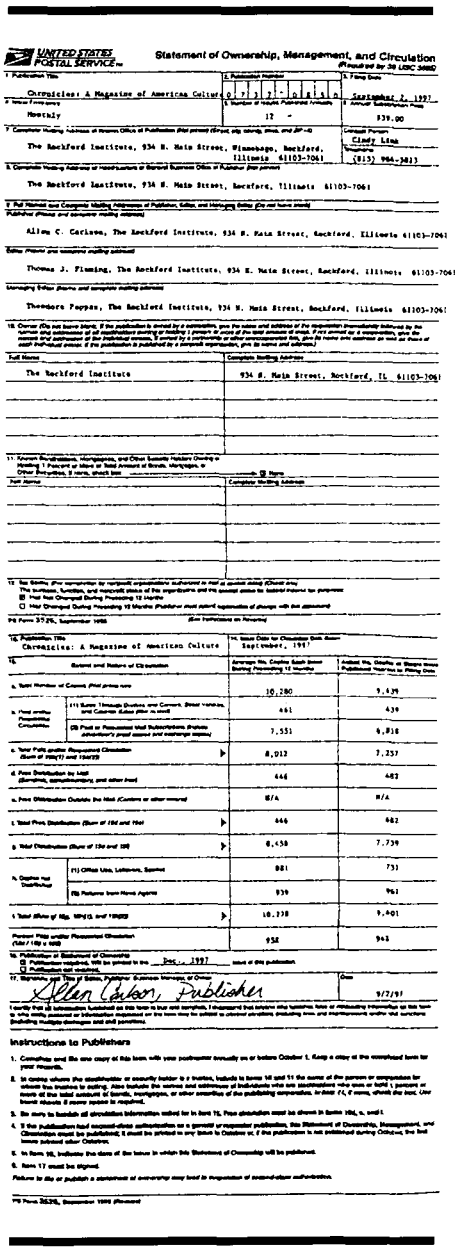
Foster justifies his substitution of day-to-day chronological events for Yeats's carefully shaped retrospections by saying, "We do not, alas, live our lives in themes, but day by day." That is, to say the least, a debatable proposition. To begin with, it is a false antithesis; some of us think we live our lives in themes, day by day. Some of us would even be prepared to say that, considered as an organizing principle, that sentence disqualifies one from writing any kind of biography, let alone a poet's.

Fortunately, and like many a writer, Foster does not believe in his own principle. He uses it to dismantle Yeats's patterns and themes but forgets it when he comes to assemble his own. His book has a narrative pattern; it treats Yeats as a generic Anglo-Irishman growing up, as Foster says repeatedly, in the decline of the Protestant ascendancy, driven to reimagine a version of Ireland that would accommodate him and his ambitions. Consequently, he turned to Irish nationalism, and to an idiosyncratic blend of Celticism and occultism, for the materials of stories in which he could play the characteristic ascendancy roles of hero, master, and sage.

This is where one hears, in the background of Foster's book, the faint sounds of an axe being ground. If Yeats's version of Ireland, which has proved so influential with readers of his work outside of Ireland, should prove to be an ascendancy myth in another key, then it has no more authority, as history, than his other personal inventions. And if that is so, then from an Irish point of view, Yeats's literary reputation must be at best an irrelevance, at worst a case of spectacular meddling in the national life. To see whether this is the drift of Professor Foster's book, we shall have to wait for the second volume, which will take Yeats through the 1916 rebellion, the civil war, and into the Irish senate.

In the meantime, this is a fascinating book. The story of how Augusta Gregory and Yeats used Annie Horniman's money to found the Abbey Theatre, and then got rid of her, is alone worth the price of admission. Inevitably, in such an exhaustive work, there are some weaknesses. Foster brings in too many inadequately described characters to populate the context or provide a quotation, and his index offers little help in identifying them. His grammar and syntax are not always correct, and there is no real bibliography, which one hopes will be supplied in the second volume.

Frank Brownlow teaches English at Mount Holyoke College. His most recent book is Robert Southwell *(Twayne Publishers).*



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by Samuel Francis

Nationalism, True and False

Ruling classes exercise power through combinations of coercion and manipulation—what Machiavelli called force and fraud, or the habits of the lion and the fox that he recommended to princes who wish to stay in power. Like most princes, most ruling classes tend to be better at one than the other, and depending on their talents, interests, and psychologies, they will habitually rely on one style of domination more than on its complement. In the 20th century, totalitarian regimes have rested their power on the use of force—to the point of what the Germans came to call *Schrecklichkeit*, or terror, pure and simple—but they did not fail to attend to the arts of manipulation as well. Communist brainwashing and the high science of propaganda that Joseph Goebbels perfected were perhaps as useful to their respective regimes and the ruling classes they served as the Cheka and the Gestapo.

Unlike European totalitarians, their American counterpart in this century has tended to rely on manipulation, which involves not only indoctrination through the mass media but also the whole battery of techniques by which the population is manipulated to think and act in the way that the managerial ruling class wants it to think and act. Those techniques include the bread and circuses of mass consumerism and the entertainment industry as well as the blunter ideological disciplining delivered every night on television and in most Hollywood films. Of the two styles of power, reliance on manipulation is probably more effective and certainly more economical than reliance on force. Every shepherd knows it's more expedient to train a sheep dog to keep the sheep in line than to run after every beast that strays from the fold himself, and every ruler or ruling class understands that the means of force are always finite while the means of manipulation are virtually inexhaustible.

The reliance of the American managerial class on manipulation rather than force explains why dissidents are not simply rounded up and imprisoned or shot as they were in the sister regimes in Europe, as well as why the victory of the new elite in the middle of the century was so peaceful and virtually invisible to all but keen observers like James Burnham, C. Wright Mills, Garet Garrett, and a few others. Instead of being repressed, opponents of the revolution were either ignored and marginalized or, in some cases, rewarded and thereby digested within the belly of the beast. Even the harebrained bomb throwers of the New Left were not for the most part seriously subjected to coercive repression, except perhaps by local and state police agencies that had not yet been "sensitized" by the regime's federal law enforcement apparatus, but rather were coddled, rebuked, and generally ignored until they grew up. Within a decade of their prediction of the storm of revolution that was about to descend on the ruling class, most of the more grotesque spokesmen of the Weather Underground had become dentists, insurance salesmen, and big-city lawyers, and the intelligence, security, and law enforcement branches of the regime never paid as much attention to the Weathermen, the Black Panthers, or the various Maoists, Guevarists, and Trotskyites as they are paying today to perfectly law-abiding and patriotic militias and grassroots activists of the right.

Today, the regime is paying attention to the right for one simple reason—the means of manipulation is beginning to crumble as the official ideology of the regime is discredited and rejected and as alternative means of communication become available that the ruling class is unable to control. Computers, faxes, the Internet, and other technologies allow dissident groups to flourish and to communicate with each other in ways that were not available to dissidents of an earlier day, and all of these technologies are (so far) virtually independent of both police power and the manipulative reach of the regime. Hence, incidents like Waco, Ruby Ridge, and similar acts of coercive repression become necessary to discipline the opposition (our very own form of *Schrecklichkeit*), and the emerging federal police state, with the help of semiprivate intelligence-gathering arms like the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center, can be expected to use coercion at least as thoroughly as the secret police of the European dictators.

Nevertheless, the ruling class is not stupid, and it knows very well that it cannot sit on bayonets forever. Therefore, it is rather clumsily trying to patch together new means of manipulation before the whole society spins out of its control. President Clinton and the "New Democrats" are the left side of this effort, while what is generally known (at least among paleoconservatives) as "neoconservatism" is its right side. Both are essential to preserve the illusion of political and ideological alternatives and the shadow of freedom, but any close examination will show that there is about as much real difference between them as there was between the Dole-Kemp ticket last year and its rival.

The Clintonian effort at keeping the sheep of the left within the herd seems to have been successful, at least for now, but on the right there are problems. Unlike the left, the right has actually produced a real and politically significant alternative to neoconservatism in the Buchanan movement and in paleoconservatism and the "hard right" in general—ranging from this magazine and related groups like the John Randolph Club and a variety of grassroots activists to the militias and their constituencies. The problem for neoconservatism is that most Americans on the right don't buy what it's selling and do not look to it for political or ideological leadership.

What is to be done? If at first you don't succeed, try again. In the last few months, the neoconservatives have been trying to set a new ideological line, one that might reasonably be expected to capture the populist right and prepare it for digestion by the regime, and thereby ensure that it does not eventually produce a movement or a leader that can seriously challenge its power.

The new mold in which neoconservatism is trying to cast itself is "nationalism," and its guiding spirit is William Kristol of the *Weekly Standard*. Nationalism, of course, also happens to be the theme of most of the populist right, whether it is directed against immigration, which threatens to extinguish the

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actual people of the nation; free trade and globalism, which threaten both the economic interests and sovereignty of the nation; or multiculturalism, which neither the mainstream left nor right now seriously questions. Hence, it makes sense that the high priests of the dominant right would seek to reinvent nationalism and to redefine it in terms that will offer no serious challenge to the antinational forces they really represent.

Mr. Kristol's main formulation of neocon nationalism appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* on September 15, in an article coauthored with his colleague at the *Weekly Standard*, David Brooks. Mr. Brooks, in fact, has been busily pounding the pseudonationalist drum for some time. In the last few months, he has published articles in the *Standard* praising Teddy Roosevelt as a hero for conservatives and extolling the architecture of the Library of Congress as the aesthetic expression of high nationalism. One can quibble with either or both, but the kind of nationalism he and Mr. Kristol are trying to sell would have little appeal to Roosevelt and seems not to have penetrated very far into any library at all.

Their proposed models for the new neocon nationalism include not only TR but also Alexander Hamilton and Henry Clay. "American nationalism," they write, "the nationalism of Alexander Hamilton and Henry Clay and Teddy Roosevelt—has never been European blood-and-soil nationalism. It's true that in the absence of a real appeal to national greatness, some conservatives are tempted, à la Pat Buchanan, to turn to this European tradition. But this can't and shouldn't work in America. Our nationalism is that of an exceptional nation founded on a universal principle, on what Lincoln called 'an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times.'" It is no accident that these also happen to be among the very figures that Pat Buchanan has cited as exponents of the economic nationalism that has been the norm throughout most of American history.

This tells us all we need to know about the Kristol-Brooks school of nationalism. It's a nationalism that takes the main advocates of a centralized state as its heroes but leaves out of its picture of "national greatness" any reference to the real nation—its people (blood), its land (soil), its interests, or its contemporary manifestations (in Buchanan and his following, which happens to be rather larger than that of the *Weekly Standard*). What is objectively wrong with the Kristol-Brooks version of nationalism is what I argued some years ago was wrong with the Hamilton-Clay-Lincoln version of it. Designed essentially to represent the material interests of a particular section (the commercial and industrial Northeast), it was an instrumental nationalism, merely an instrument or tool to unify the real nation under the dominance of that section and its interests by masking them as "nationalism." But neither Hamilton nor Clay was able to make it prevail, and Lincoln and his party succeeded for as long as they did only because of the power vacuum generated by the Civil War. It failed because it ignored the interests of the real nation. It is one thing to endorse the economic and trade policies of these leaders, as Buchanan does (and Kristol and Brooks do not), but those policies can be justified apart from the general vision of the state and nation that Hamilton, Clay, Lincoln, and Roosevelt entertained.

The content of the phony nationalism formulated by Kristol and Brooks is enough to tell us how it differs from the organic nationalism that is actually emerging on the populist right, which the *Weekly Standard* crowd seeks to smother in its cradle. "Our pride in settling the frontier, welcoming immigrants and advancing the cause of freedom around the world is related to our dedication to our principles"—the universalist nationalism of Lincoln.

> That is why American nationalism is not narrow or parochial. It does not believe in closing our borders or fearing the global economy. It does believe in resisting group rights and multiculturalism and other tendencies that weaken our attachment to our common principles. It embraces a neo-Reaganite foreign policy of national strength and moral assertiveness abroad. It would use federal power to preserve and enhance our national patrimony—the parks, buildings, and monuments that are the physical manifestations of our common heritage. And it insists that while government should be limited, it should also be energetic.

So, neocon universalist nationalism would swallow the real nation through mass immigration and continued extinction of the national economic interest through immersion into the "global economy" and would reject multiculturalism, not because it threatens the destruction of the cultural nucleus of the real nation, but because it weakens attachment to "our common principles." Like the instrumental nationalism of Hamilton, it envisions an "energetic" national state that, at the very least, becomes a kind of super-janitor for public buildings and parks. What is conspicuous by its absence in the Kristol-Brooks vision of nationalism is any reference whatsoever to the Constitution as both the limiting and energizing framework of the national state.

Nor is it an accident that only a few weeks before the Kristol-Brooks discovery of the nationalism of Hamilton and his heirs, George Will wrote, "The challenge is for conservatism to find a place in its pantheon for three great nationalists—Alexander Hamilton, Henry Clay and Theodore Roosevelt." For Mr. Soulcraft, the invocation of these three as heroes is not surprising, though the occasion and the timing of his column are of interest. The occasion was the *Weekly Standard*'s symposium in August on the "Worldwide Conservative Crack-Up," and the Will column and the subsequent Kristol-Brooks piece in the *Journal* were the first shots in the new effort to formulate an ideology for the right that can eventually castrate the radical nationalism of the populist right today while preserving the managerial state by claiming that it is the natural legacy of the pseudonationalism of Hamilton, Clay, and the first Roosevelt.

It is doubtful that the nationalist right will be deluded by the Kristol-Brooks-Will counterfeit. Populist nationalism, if not quite of the blood-and-soil variety, at least proceeds from a more authentic grasp of the organic life and people of the real nation than theirs, and most of the more serious exponents of the nationalism of the populist right have long since come to reject the unmitigated statism and globalism that lie at the heart of the neoconservative agenda. The right wing of the managerial class will have to come up with a means of ideological manipulation that is a bit more subtle and a lot more persuasive than either the defunct neoconservatism of their parents or the stillborn neonationalism that the *Weekly Standard* has invented. Until it does, the regime on which the American ruling class rests will continue to crumble. ◦c

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Letter From Chicago

by Thomas F. Roeser

To Archbishop Francis George

◆

I won't say congratulations on your appointment because the wreckage left for you to pick up is horrendous . . . and the abuse you will take if—and, please God, when—you attempt to clean it up could shorten your life. While you have criss-crossed the archdiocese to introduce yourself, I have seen positive traits. As a theologian, you are stating time-tested truths, unlike some of your brother bishops who engage in deliberate manipulation of public opinion to achieve political goals within the Church.

So let me extend thanks for what you have not done. You have not indicated fear that unfavorable notice by the media is a grave evil. Few bishops, regrettably, have mustered the strength to stand up to the media in order to do their duty. James Hitchcock remarked nearly 20 years ago that "almost imperceptibly public relations considerations began more and more to govern decision-making at certain levels of the church and proponents of change were able to make maximum use of the fear of bad publicity." Your predecessor, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, aided by a monsignor named Kenneth Velo (supposedly the full-time head of the Extension Society, which provides aid to disadvantaged rural dioceses), consequently enjoyed the best media in town. The faithful will know you are hitting the mark when you get "bad" media.

"Photo ops" were all the rage to take the sting out of closing inner-city parishes and schools. The logical question was: Why not continue to use them to evangelize? The archdiocesean theologian, however, disdained such rude activity. Evangelization is not popular with modern theologians or the media. At any rate, do not count on near canonization by editorial boards and television anchors. They only beatified your predecessor because of his leftist foreign and economic policies.

Thus I appreciate your refusal to take a position on nuclear testing or to weigh in on the immorality of tax cuts. You have not suggested that the Pope's flat "no" on women priests does not preclude negotiation. You have not said a word in support of your predecessor's expressed doubt of the authenticity of John 8:31-50. And you have not endorsed the views of some 50 pastors on the subject of general absolution—the kind that is granted without personal confession of private sins—who believe that confession resembles the superstition followed by early 20th-century savages in the Borneo jungle.

Faithful Catholics dare to hope that your restraint means you do not view your role as arbiter of a babble of conflicting voices, as politicians so often view public office. The media's favorite priest, Andrew Greeley (were he merely Mr. Greeley his racy fiction would not sell), has not yet conquered you. He sits in his John Hancock apartment waiting for his phone to ring . . . with a call, he hopes, from you. That you have not apparently called, or at least that Msgr. Velo has not yet leaked such news, is gratifying.

So thanks for what you have *not* done. Now let me make a fervent wish as to what you can do. First, utilizing your doctorates in theology and philosophy, teach what is distilled so simply in the Baltimore Catechism, amplified fully in the latest catechism (which Cardinal Bernardin claimed is not appropriate for direct teaching). Yes, I know: this is ancient stuff, drawn from Aquinas. But in Chicago, Aquinas is not stressed—indeed hardly taught—at our so-called "Catholic" universities. It will be exhilarating for a scholar like you to reteach us, if only to see how priests, nuns, auxiliary bishops, and the media will be stunned.

Perhaps most stunned will be the so-called "Catholic educators." A full generation of university-trained priests were given a choice: they could either profess moral neutrality or they could be ignored and farmed out to retirement homes. Most emerged from their crypts to say that the gods favor secularization.

To attain the moral virtues we must summon—and under your guidance the Church will assist—prudence for the mind, justice for the will, temperance for our weakness to indulge in unrestrained concupiscence, and fortitude to bolster the will to make hard decisions. The church in Chicago—and elsewhere—has forsaken these moral virtues. We have embarked on media tours, warm and fuzzy public relations, blessing dissidents, bestowing funds raised from hard-pressed contributors to Saul Alinsky-like revolutionaries under the rubric of the "Campaign for Human Development," while ignoring congregations ripe for instruction in these Christ-centered decencies. The problems of promiscuity, illegitimacy, and divorce often lead to the violence, crime, and murder, which are at the heart of our urban, suburban, and exurban hemorrhages. When, you may well ask on your parish rounds, was the last time you heard a sermon extolling chastity? Shoulders will shrug, and the answer will be "never." Is it because we have mastered this virtue? We all know the answer.

Your episcopate must uncompromisingly assert the transcendent importance of Jesus Christ. Do not underestimate the opposition that will come from priests with prepackaged secular observations, or from the media which supports the contention that the interpretation of Catholic teaching is best left to them rather than to the Pope. You may well be in for the fight of your life. To most priests of Chicago, to most media, manipulation of publicity for strategic purposes is indispensable to their control of the Church.

What will happen, then, if you continue despite their opposition? Well, you will win, obviously. The Catholics of Chicago will support you. They hunger and thirst for a return of a Church of confident self-definition that restores the continuity of generations, supporting reasonable innovation while rekindling the old zeal.

A word of caution: you are entering mission country. Our people have lived largely with the prosperity of the post-World War II period. For the older generation, the Church gave meaning to

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those who suffer. To many priests today, this idea is incomprehensible. Religion to them has little to do with suffering; it is a bland imitation of the Rotary Club. They still follow the spurious postconciliar notion that the Church must accommodate public taste in order to gain more members. Father Greeley, a pollster, points out that the Church must be led by its membership rather than by divine inspiration. Ergo: Father Greeley found that Irish-American Catholics under 30 are "the second most permissive group in the country" in contrast to their parents. His entire commentary (not to mention his book sales) is rooted in the notion that moral virtues are archaic; there is but one surviving absolute: the Democratic party of the Daley family, which he serves as faithful sacristan.

You will find a good many priests are bored with strong Catholic belief and are eager to accept other creeds, particularly New Age; a heavy majority embrace as "tolerance" a misguided flabbiness that says all doctrines are equally valid. At bottom, the supposition of many priests and laity—reflected particularly in the writings of Father Greeley—has its roots in sexuality and the deliberate ridicule of the sexual norms that have governed the West for two millennia.

The practice of homosexuality and its support by many in the priesthood is rife in Chicago. Still lingering in popular memory is the "Mass" offered years ago for a meeting of homosexuals. According to the *Boston Tablet*, the event, concelebrated by 50 priests, featured a dance in which "the marvelously good humored but never indecorous jollification went on past midnight." This sacrilege contrasts with the sober and dedicated but tiny organization "Courage," which preaches the strong and compelling beauty of married heterosexuality or chastity born of the willingness to confront the license that secular society approves.

Enough for now. Take as your model the French Jesuits who came here to convert the Iroquois in Canada. Remember what happened to many of them. Recall the martyrdom that gained them sainthood. Media martyrdom and clerical revolution will attest to your endeavors.

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Letter From Paris

by Curtis Cate

Diana—Goddess of Illusion

◆

We live in an increasingly hysterical, media-manipulated world in which almost nothing is sacred anymore except—the words must be italicized to emphasize their gravity—except *popularity*, or, to be more precise, *what is popular*.

This was one of the first thoughts that occurred to me when, shortly before 8:00 A.M. (French time) on Sunday, August 31, I heard a BBC voice say that Princess Diana had died during the night in a car crash in—of all places—Paris. This was merely the first in a series of surprises.

One of the pleasures offered to someone who lives in Western Europe is the ability to switch on the radio and listen to the BBC's "World Service," which, unlike London's loathsome gutter press, has on the whole remained a model of intelligent, internationally minded objectivity. On Sunday mornings, in particular, one is normally offered three excellent programs in succession. The first, "On Your Farm," records a breakfast conversation conducted by Oliver Woolston (I can't vouch for the spelling) with some farmer (and usually his wife) not only in some British county but in places as distant as Bavaria, Finland, Kenya, or Uganda. The second is a fascinating program devoted to contemporary religious problems all over the globe. The third is another smoothly articulated "Letter from America," by Alistair Cooke, who (now well into his 80's) must be the doyen of all radio commentators in the English-speaking world.

Well, on Sunday, August 31, all three programs vanished, washed out of sight (or more exactly, sound) by an avalanche of news about the tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales; an avalanche that continued to roar and rumble down the journalistic slopes not only for all of that Sunday but for the rest of the ensuing week. Indeed, it was not until the following Sunday, September 7, after the incredible Saturday apotheosis at Westminster Abbey, that the BBC began to recover its customary rhythm and composure.

That Princess Diana, the self-crowned "Queen of Hearts," should have been killed in Paris was, like John Kennedy's death in Dallas, one of those geographical accidents that even the most "infallible" fortune-teller has difficulty predicting with any degree of accuracy. I am old enough to have a vivid recollection of the tragic death in 1936 of Queen Astrid of Belgium, a "beauty" even more dazzling than Diana and a product of the country (Sweden) that gave us Greta Garbo. And if I mention this earlier automobile accident, it is because in that case, too, the car in which the unfortunate victim was traveling was not being driven by the regular chauffeur; he had been relegated by royal order to the back seat by King Leopold III, who had taken control of the steering wheel. The accident had traumatic consequences for the guilt-stricken Belgian monarch who, when his country was being overrun by Wehrmacht forces in June 1940, refused to follow Queen Wilhelmina of Holland's resolute example by moving to London, afraid that if he did so, it would be interpreted by his subjects as an easy "escape" by a man who was unwilling to share the grim misfortunes of his countrymen. (Marshal Pétain, I might add, had exactly the same feeling about his kinship with his own people—which is why, incredible as it may sound, he was adulated by a majority of French men and women right up until the relatively late moment of the Allied invasion of Normandy in June 1944.)

What was not accidental about Princess Diana's tragic death was the appalling fact that she was hounded to death by the tabloid press, more precisely by a mosquito-like species of snapshot-takers now known as *paparazzi*. The word derives, according to one story, from *paparazzo*, originally the Italian word for the kind of "wolfish" young man who stalks the sidewalks paying outlandish compliments to any attractive *signorina* who happens to come along, in the hope of being able to "pick her up." Another report says Federico Fellini invented the word for *La dolce Vita*. In any event, the French have a word that even more graphically describes this kind of gallant activity: it is *draguer*—literally to "dredge," much as a minesweeper does when it tries to pick up mines, or a fisherman when he uses a dragnet to collect shellfish from the ocean floor. In Paris, as in Rome, where the charms of life

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have not yet been totally blighted by aggressive feminism, it is still regarded as quite normal for an enterprising young man to be a *dragueur* and to honor the passage of a lovely *demoiselle* with a shower of flattering compliments.

The attentions lavished by photographic *paparazzi* on their chosen victim are obviously of quite a different order. They are a radically new and offensive species generated by what Daniel Boorstin, anticipating Marshall McLuhan, called the "graphic revolution"—the amplification, not to say the replacement, of the printed word by the printed image.

It was, if ever there was one, the triumph of the smutty image over the smutty word, one more shameless indulgence in vicarious sin, in *fin-de-siècle voyeurisme*, for which the popular appetite today seems to be unlimited. As Albert Camus noted decades ago in his last novel, *La Chute*, a modern parable based on Dante's *Inferno*, the two dominant types of contemporary "sinners" are the "fornicators and newspaper-readers." There was indeed a cruel irony in the title conferred by semiliterate newsmen and newswomen on Princess Diana immediately after her death. She had ceased to be merely human; she had been raised to the level of myth; she had quite simply become an "icon" (more correctly spelled "ikon")—the Greek word for "image."

It has been glaringly apparent for some time that if any semblance of decency is to be preserved in the West, something will have to be done to curb the invasive excesses of the "Fourth Estate." Some 20 years ago, English critic George Steiner wrote a brilliant article in *Encounter* in which he declared that the protection of individual privacy against the increasingly arrogant invasions of the press was going to be one of the major problems of the final years of this century. He was right, but his prophetic admonition seems to have fallen on deaf ears.

This stubborn deafness—or perhaps, in this age of imagery and mass idolatry, one should call it blindness—is by no means limited to journalists and newspaper editors who find it quite normal to pander shamelessly to the sick curiosity of the public. For the intellectual rot has spread so far that in the United States today it has thoroughly corrupted members of the "Third Power"—that of the judiciary—who now openly confess that they can no longer define the nature of "obscenity" and who can regard a crucifix in a pool of urine as a "work of art" and a perfectly valid expression of the "freedom of speech" guaranteed by the First Amendment.

All of the great minds who over the centuries formulated the basic principles upon which our civic (but now increasingly uncivic) life depends understood one thing instinctively, simply because they had been brought up on a study of the Greek and Roman classics: an excess of liberty (potentially a virtue) leads inexorably to license (unquestionably a vice). So it was with John Milton, the first great defender of freedom of expression; with John Locke, the first to propound the heretical notion (contradicting the divine right of kings to rule) of majority rule—one radically different, I might add, from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's totalitarian notion of *la souveraineté du peuple*; with Montesquieu, the farsighted advocate of the principle of the separation of powers, on which the United States Constitution is based; with Alexis de Tocqueville, with his prophetic warnings against the tyranny of public opinion in American democracy; and with John Stuart Mill, whose brilliant essay *On Liberty* is something that every politician in every modern democracy should be required to read, and to reread once a year. Because all these men were familiar with the history of ancient Greece and Rome, they knew that democracy secretes a deadly toxin the ancient Greeks called "demagogy," and that liberty, if allowed to run wild, degenerates into anarchy and license, and from there just as naturally into tyranny.

Last August, Claude Imbert, the editor of the weekly *Le Point*, had the luminous idea of devoting part of a midsummer holiday issue to the distinctly uncontemporary figure of Plato, hailed on the cover as the "inventor of philosophy." It is typical of the eyecatching "necessities" of our mass-circulation age that such a well-inspired initiative should have been marred by such an inaccurate affirmation. Plato, far from being the "inventor" of philosophy, was a relative latecomer to the intellectual scene who had been preceded by a number of genuine pioneers—Thales, Anaxagoras, Xenophanes, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Empedocles, etc.—who wanted to recreate some kind of rational order from the collapsing debris of Olympian mythology. But what most surprised me about this otherwise admirable attempt to educate the reading public was that none of the highly competent contributors to *Le Point* stressed the fact that it is to Plato that we owe the very notion of "value" and "values."

It is highly significant that Plato, who spent most of his life trying to distinguish what is valuable and imperishable from what is transient and deceptive, should have devoted his various dialogues to things like beauty, goodness, friendship, justice, wisdom, love, God, the nature of the afterlife, etc., but that it never occurred to him to devote an entire dialogue to liberty. The reason was simply that, whereas wisdom, beauty, goodness, or justice can be regarded as *absolute* values or ideals, liberty is only a *relative* value or ideal. Liberty is not something that has any substantial existence; it is simply a possibility. It is freedom to do this or that, freedom to be this or that: generous or miserly, courageous or cowardly, honest or dishonest, kindhearted or cruel, selfish or unselfish, hardworking or lazy, responsible or irresponsible, truthful or mendacious, polite or rude, discreet or indiscreet.

Ultimately, it is not the mere fact of being free that matters; what matters is what one chooses to do with freedom. It is one of the great merits of 20th-century philosophy, whether "resistantialist" (like Ortega y Gasset's) or "existentialist" (like Jean-Paul Sartre's), to have recognized that the constricting nature of freedom—which is always a freedom of *choice*—is the very basis of the human condition. As Sartre put it: man, whether he likes it or not, is condemned to be free.

This is a truth, however, that our contemporary world seems bent on ignoring. Like the French revolutionaries, who raised "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" to the level of absolute ideals (not realizing that they were inherently contradictory, not to say incompatible), the contemporary Western world has made freedom an end in itself, an absolute, sacrosanct value to which everything else—dignity, decency, privacy—must be subordinated. Both "freedom of expression" and a new, cynically exploited absolute—the "right to be informed"—are now being invoked to justify every outrage, no matter how despicable and pernicious. They are inviolable "principles" that cannot be tampered with; they have become a "law" unto itself, and one that thus takes precedence over all others.

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Diana's last interview was given, significantly enough, on June 13 to a woman journalist, Anick Cojean, who works for *Le Monde*, one of the few newspapers in the world that has steadfastly refused to publish photographs (though it does employ cartoonists) and which has sought to maintain the undisputed supremacy of the printed word. In this interview Diana complained bitterly of the pursued and hunted life she was now forced to lead by a swarm of journalistic stalkers who had become so omnipresent and expert at high-speed espionage that extraordinary ruses and decoys—with several chauffeur-driven cars driving off in different directions—now had to be employed in an attempt to "throw them off the scent."

During her last afternoon in Paris, Diana left the Ritz Hotel where she had been staying with her lover, wishing to do some discreet shopping in various fashionable stores near the Champs-Elysées. The swarm of inquisitive photographers and journalists who dogged her every step finally became so obnoxious that she was forced to return, dismayed and frustrated, to her future father-in-law's hotel, where she must have felt like a trapped animal.

The supreme irony of her fate is that, in the final analysis, it was not altogether accidental. Had she had the foresight of a Winston Churchill or an Eisenhower, who during World War II had "doubles" driven around in cars in order to deceive Nazi killer-squads, Princess Diana might have saved her life by finding a suitable double to deceive her pursuers. But in peacetime, such extreme measures are inconceivable.

And so she died, victim of the very forces she had so thoughtlessly encouraged. For, unlike Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who detested having a photograph taken of her, Diana had no objection to being filmed while accomplishing well-publicized acts of charity—in favor of the downtrodden and oppressed, of African lepers, of victims of AIDS, of footless cripples mutilated by mines laid in Bosnia, etc. She who had not hesitated to give an unprecedented television interview in order to make her personal sufferings as a wife and mother known to the entire world thus became a consummate actress.

Religions, even in an age of mass idolatry like ours, tend to be morally demanding, as an editorialist in the *Gazette de Lausanne* aptly pointed out. Diana, however, made no such demands on her devotees. This was the secret of her extraordinary success. She became Diana, Goddess of the Spectacle, not to say the Goddess of Illusion—and the intellectual emptiness of her personality was precisely what made it so easy for her "fans" to project their own fantasies upon her.

There are roles one assumes in life which then become part of one's character, and this seems to have been the case with Princess Diana. To avenge herself for the humiliations she had suffered at the hands of the British Royal Family, she chose to play the part of a modern *mater dolorosa*, expressing her maternal grief over the "loss" of two sons she had not been allowed to "educate" according to her personal wishes and in a truly "modern" style. Like so many of her contemporaries, who lived and live simultaneously in two worlds—the world of harsh, everyday reality and the dream world of television "irreality"—she wanted to have her cake and eat it too, gaily kicking up her heels in nightclubs while remaining Her Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales. It was a dangerous game, but the public loved it because it was so unconventional, so unstuffy, so "exciting." But in so doing she aroused the gargantuan appetite of the scandalmongers and tabloid gossipers who pursued her like Furies to the ends of the earth. And so she died, as she had lived for the last few months of her existence, pursued and finally mauled by the monster she had too frequently caressed.

Curtis Cate, who lives in Paris, is the author, most recently, of André Malraux: A Biography, *reviewed in our October issue.*

Letter From Inner Israel

by Jacob Neusner

The Yale Experience

◆

Leave it to Yale to hoist itself by its own snoot—the snootiest college in the country has finally given itself its own comeuppance. Yale has declared promiscuity, or at least exposure to aggressively promoted public promiscuity, to form an integral part of "the Yale experience." They've told some nice Orthodox Jewish boys that, if they object to urinating and defecating in the presence of girls, they should go to some other school, since they would be required at Yale to reside in dorms where toilets are not "gender-specific," as they say in political-correctnessese.

The students asked to live off-campus, rather than in the Yale-sponsored whorehouses called dormitories. Raised in Orthodox Judaism, which—like Islam and evangelical, Orthodox, and Catholic Christianity—teaches sexual restraint and modesty between the sexes, the students tried to escape the de rigueur environment of forced receipt of condoms, normative alcoholism, and required sharing of bathrooms by both sexes. The Torah says Abraham saved Lot from Sodom; they followed suit. In reply, Yale told them they had come to the wrong place, and that they should leave Yale if they did not want to share "the Yale Experience."

Sure, Yale officials want to accommodate students' "religious needs." But according to the *New York Times*, they also say that "students who come to Yale know in advance that it is 'a defining requirement' of a Yale education that lowerclass-men live on campus." The dean, Richard Brodhead, adds, "Part of Yale's unique offering is the chance for students to learn about other outlooks by living in the unique community. If you allow all groups based on affiliation or conviction to separate themselves from the whole university community, you open the door to all kinds of self-segregation that this place has worked very hard against." Self-segregation apparently encompasses separate men's rooms and ladies' rooms.

Yale's flack, Thomas Conroy, says it even better: "We understand that aspect of the Yale educational experience is not going to be attractive to everyone, and we understand it means some prospective students will choose to go to school elsewhere." That is to say, if you want to make wee-wee by yourself, don't come to Yale. Wow!

Leave it to Yale to speak of what it sells as "an experience"—not as an education. Notice the issue: it is not a required course that the students object to taking, or a required area of learning—let alone a required body of knowledge. It is something that sounds amorphous but

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that is, in fact, quite specific: the Yale Experience. If you don't want to find condoms at your dinner plate or to accord to the holy other the divine right to fornicate even when you want to sleep, go somewhere else. The Yale Experience is not for you.

What strange, pretentious language! My colleagues at Bard College speak, quite properly, of a Bard education, and that means some specific, worthwhile things. My colleagues at the University of South Florida, our huge, full-service university on the urban frontier, do not have the leisure to speak of the "South Florida experience," but perhaps that is because (among other reasons) we are misnamed, being located in west-central Florida. But at Yale, that is the way people talk.

I cannot speak Yale-talk, but I understand it, because a few decades ago, the chairman of Yale's (infamously mediocre) department of religious studies, Wayne Meeks, wrote me to explain why I could not be appointed to an opening: "Granted you're the best in the world, but we have to choose what's best for Yale." I wondered whether Meeks stood for Yale or only for his personal sense of Yale. So I asked him whether the Yale Medical School might tell a brain surgeon, or the physics department tell an astrophysicist, "Granted you're the best in the world, but we have to choose the brain surgeon/astrophysicist who is best for Yale." I received no reply.

Still, for veteran Yale-watchers—as a West Hartford boy of the late 1940's, when Yale was unashamedly anti-Semitic and told Jews their kind should go elsewhere, it comes naturally to me—the current brouhaha still astounds. Yale requires freshmen and sophomores to live on campus. But the Jewish students complained, "Yale . . . encourages a lifestyle in the dormitories that there's no way a fully observant Orthodox Jew can live in." Single-sex dorms and floors do not help, because the toilets are open to both men and women. The dormitory environment is defined by the university. At a freshman orientation lecture, students are told how courteously "to ask your roommate to leave when you want to have sex with your girlfriend." The rest of Yales' sex pep talks for freshmen I leave to the reader's imagination.

But for the Orthodox students, matters were not so simple. In their first year, they actually did live off-campus, paying the required fees for a dorm room, but even that (rather extravagant) expedient is now denied them. No one has explained why they cannot, in their sophomore year, avoid the Yale Experience that they did not have in their freshman year. So off they have gone to the lawyers and the headlines.

Recently, Brown University's new president told the incoming class that their task is "to rebel." In 1997? Against what? Brown's tough curriculum, which requires not a single course, abounds in pass/fail options, and demands little more than four years of breathing in exchange for a degree of dubious value—rebel against that? No, the real message is that what the students bring to campus—the identities formed in community, home, and family, in American civilization as it still flourishes—finds a cool welcome.

That is why the Yale experience has its own surprises to set forth. Writing in the *New York Times*, William Glaberson reports, "Some students and faculty members on campus here say the debate raises fundamental questions about how much universities should channel people into shared experiences and how much they should encourage students to maintain their group identities." He quotes "a Yale history professor, Ivan Marcus," as saying, "The university would be in chaos if it bent over backward to accommodate everyone's sensitivities."

Now in the context of Yale's sexual zealotry, this statement is hardly surprising, especially the bending-over part. But the source amazes. Innocently described as a mere history professor, Ivan Marcus is in fact not only Yale's professor of "Jewish history," but a rabbi. He comes to Yale from the position of professor and provost at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, where for most of his career he educated rabbis in the same religious tradition that the Orthodox students maintain condemns promiscuity. When students enter JTSA, they sign a pledge to practice the teaching of the Torah. Marcus signed that pledge when he entered, just as I did when I came along. But as a professor at Yale, he fears "the chaos that would result" if Yale accommodated the "sensitivities" of students who practice Judaism's teachings concerning sexual modesty and purity. Talk about hypocrisy and selling out to the other side! Marcus strikes me as little more than a cultural Kapo, serving the Kommandant of Stalag Yale (who is also Jewish).

When I taught at Brown, I remember that the economics professors would ask, "Is this particular crisis absolutely necessary?" So in this case, I wondered, did Yale perhaps have no choice but to join the lunatic fringe of politically correct zealotry? I consulted a housing director of a large private university. He reassured me that any competent housing director can organize suitable housing for small groups of students with special requirements. He does it every day, as do all of his colleagues.

What does it take to set aside a few rooms on a secluded floor for students who do not wish to share toilets with the opposite sex and who voluntarily wish to impose parietal rules on their own rooms? Only the stroke of a pen, and yet Yale won't do this. (As we go to press, Yale says it is now willing to assign the Jewish men to an all-male floor but not willing to enforce any rules or restrictions regarding activities on their floor, meaning it will only accommodate the men on paper.)

Cripples have their ramps; gays and lesbians, their K-Y dispensers and their double beds; blacks, their own graduation ceremonies; Hispanics, their own unions; voyeurs, their unisex toilets—all courtesy of university administrators. But rather than extend the same "sensitivity" to scarcely a *minyan*—a quorum—of Orthodox Jews, Yale would rather humiliate itself publicly and announce, "You're not welcome here."

But they do not mean *only* a handful of Orthodox Jews. They mean religious Jews, Christians, and Muslims, who abide by the divine injunctions concerning sexuality—encompassing modesty—that all three monotheist religions hold as revealed truth. Yale is making its point, loud and clear: the faithful of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity may aspire to work for God and certainly for country, but so far as Sodom by Long Island Sound is concerned, they are certainly not fit for Yale. Which means Yale has now transcended anti-Semitism and invented a whole new bigotry all its own: if you practice a traditional religion and morality, you need not apply. "The Yale educational experience is not going to be attractive to everyone."

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RELIGION

The Chastity Amendment

by Mark Tooley

The appearance of an article about American church life on the front page of the *Washington Post* is a rare occurrence. But the approval by the Presbyterian Church (United States) of a church law requiring celibacy of its nonmarried clergy gained front-page attention in the *Post* not just once but twice this year.

Treatment of the issue in both articles by religion writer Laurie Goodstein carried the tone of surprise and chagrin that a mainline church should be so intolerant. The opposition of only 40 congregations (out of over 11,000 within the 2.7 million member denomination) was headlined, with the suggestion later in the story that a church split was a real possibility. According to the subheadline in the May 16 story, the church law is "aimed at gays."

The "Fidelity and Chastity Amendment" hardly represents the advent of a new teaching, much less an inquisition within mainline Protestantism. And it is not "aimed at gays." The church law prohibits nonmarital sexual activity by *all clergy*. Although not mentioned in either piece by Goodstein, almost every major Christian denomination in the country has nearly the same policy, either specifically codified or in practice, as that which the Presbyterians have now formally ratified.

Among large, mainline churches, only the 1.5 million-member United Church of Christ officially ordains practicing homosexuals and condones other sexual behavior outside of marriage. Numerous Episcopal bishops, on their own authority, have ordained noncelibate homosexuals, despite their denomination's traditional teaching. Otherwise, Baptists, Methodists, Orthodox, Lutherans, and countless evangelical denominations expect their clergy to abide by the biblical standard that sex is confined to marriage. Catholics, of course, prohibit marriage for their clergy, who must remain celibate for life.

But to read the *Post*'s coverage of the Presbyterian action, you would think that the church was trying to resurrect chattel slavery or concubinage. The March 20 *Post* story even implied that the church law represented a backlash by conservatives, who have supposedly fumed for 30 years over the ordination of women. No mention was made that an ordained woman chaired the committee that drafted the new church law.

Most hilariously, the May 16 story quoted the pastor of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, who fretted that the new restriction will impede his church's evangelism program, especially among young adults. The reader is left wondering what precisely this church wishes Washington's young people to convert to, since the traditional Christian faith, and its standards of conduct, seem to be unacceptable.

To be fair to the *Post*, most coverage in the secular media has portrayed the Presbyterian chastity amendment as a bizarre aberration in American religious life. It is rarely acknowledged that this "new" church law merely reiterates an ancient Christian (and Jewish) teaching that began in the Scriptures and has been sustained by every major branch of Christianity for 2,000 years.

My own United Methodist Church adopted a similar church law in 1972. Although we are the third largest religious body in America (behind Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists), the Methodist requirement that clergy be monogamous in marriage and celibate in singleness has not been mentioned in any of the many news accounts I have read. This church law has been reaffirmed by every quadrennial meeting of our governing General Conference for the last 25 years.

Our denomination also declares that homosexual practices are "incompatible with Christian teaching" while affirming that persons who struggle with homosexual desire have "sacred worth" and are entitled to the church's ministry. Last year, there was a tremendous lobbying effort to overthrow Methodism's teaching on sexual conduct. Fifteen bishops openly opposed the church's standard, and several homosexual groups vigorously protested at the General Conference in Denver.

Even First Lady Hillary Clinton (herself a lifelong Methodist laywoman) joined the fray (perhaps inadvertently) when she repeated the slogan of the pro-homosexuality lobby ("Throw Open the Doors!") in her speech to the convention. However, only minutes after her departure, the delegates voted, by over a 60 percent margin, to reaffirm the traditional Christian position on sexuality.

A poll conducted by the United Methodist Church several years ago found that over 70 percent of its members supported the current church position on sexual morality and the standards for clergy. There was a similar poll in the Presbyterian Church (United States) finding even a larger majority favoring those standards. As has been the case on so many other issues, whether political or theological, the revisionist position on sexuality has been trumpeted by the church's ecclesiastical elites, while the average local church member is baffled as to why there is even a debate.

For different reasons, these debates on sexuality within the churches also left the self-appointed spokesmen of America's popular culture dumbfounded. They have been disengaged from church life for so many decades that they are astonished by any assertion of traditional religious belief. For many of these secular elites, the only moral restriction on sexual behavior is "consent."

But for believers in a transcendent moral authority and in fixed moral absolutes based upon divine revelation, mere "consent" does not pass muster. Contrary to many public misperceptions, most people of traditional faith are not trying to "impose" their morality upon society at large. But they do expect the salaried employees of their own religious institutions to uphold the teachings that are central to their faith.

Many editors and religion reporters may not be pleased by that development. But since over 160 million Americans belong to churches that uphold traditional Christian teachings regarding sex-

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uality, the media at least have an obligation to understand their teachings and to report them accurately.

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FAMILY

Abortion, Adoption, and President Clinton

by Janet Scott Barlow

Last year, in a span of less than six months, President Clinton vetoed the congressional ban on partial-birth abortion, thereby positioning himself, based on public-opinion surveys of the procedure, as an abortion extremist; and spoke publicly, more than once, about his desire, now or in the future, to adopt a child. (His current position on partial-birth abortion remains unchanged: another ban without sufficient loopholes to render it meaningless, another veto.) Through all of this, the mainstream media, sensing no moral contradiction or philosophical dissonance, treated the President's veto and his adoption longings as entirely unrelated events—which, in fact, is exactly how the President treated them.

President Clinton, of course, is entitled to both his executive powers and his personal opinions. Likewise, the rest of us are entitled to demand an explanation when the President's exercise of his authority clashes with his voluntarily stated personal views. We are entitled to this *because* he is President: he wanted the job. It is a job that grants powers of life and death but does not require public revelation of the heart's desires. So this is how I see it: to use the authority that you and you alone possess in order to allow, under what we now know are false pretenses, the killing of a nearly born baby by means that can only be described as barbaric; and to follow that action with the implication that you could, under other circumstances (i.e., were the baby *not* killed), become that baby's father—well, this is a combination of deed and words that demands moral clarification, even in this age of media obtuseness and presidential self-regard.

I will take President Clinton at his word when he says he has thought seriously about adoption. Perhaps he already sees himself as a prospective adoptive father. If so, he should not mind a few questions from an adoptive mother. Does the President realize that, just like happy couples awaiting the birth of their infants, prospective adoptive parents see their children in their imaginations, know them in their hearts, and pray for God's protection as their children not only arrive in the world but find their way home? Does he understand that every adoptive parent is the beneficiary of a woman's "choice," and that as an adoptive father his connection to this woman—whose name he might not even know—and his gratitude for her courage will be too profound for words? Has it occurred to him that his own consideration of adoption—not to mention the list of two million couples waiting to adopt—is evidence in some sense that the elective death of every viable fetus is the death of someone else's child, perhaps even the child who would become his own?

I do not believe that abortion views should be a litmus test for adoption. I know adoptive parents who, after real struggle with the issue, somehow manage to remain supportive of abortion rights. At the same time, these parents, like all adoptive parents, feel nearly weak with gratitude that *their* children—unique, distinct, utterly irreplaceable—were allowed to live. Whatever their politics, adoptive parents understand that adoption is an affirmation. One reason the zealots among the pro-choice ranks avoid discussion of adoption is that they share, albeit from opposite ends of the universe, a basic understanding with adoptive parents: adoption happens because abortion doesn't.

Adoption is not only an affirmation of life, it is an acceptance of the infinite mysteries of the human heart. Past the conceits of biology and the artificial boundaries of race, with the laws stacked against them and by routes unpredictable, strangers become families simply by choosing to do so. This fact is as humbling as it is thrilling.

Is President Clinton humble before the profundities of adoption? Only he can say. What I know for sure is that ideas have consequences, choices reflect values, deeds are of a piece with words, and not even a President—least of all a President—should be allowed to ignore, through moral carelessness, political calculation, personal arrogance, or simple ignorance the inextricable connection between the miracle of adoption and what some call "the right to life."

To follow to its logical moral conclusion the combination of what President Clinton has said about adoption and done about abortion is to arrive here: Bill Clinton is prepared to look into the eyes of my adopted daughter—or millions of other adoptees—and say this: "Yes, up to and including the moment of your birth, I would have allowed your biological mother to have you killed. And yes, I am fit in every sense to be your father." The degree to which the President might feel inhibited by that prospect is the precise degree to which he should either reconsider his political position on abortion or shut up in public about his personal affinity for adoption.

Janet Scott Barlow writes from Cincinnati, Ohio.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

How Jesse Helms Saved the U.N.

by Cliff Kincaid

Mom and Dad went to the beach and all I got was this lousy T-shirt." This saying captures a bad joke that is played on kids. But when you're chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and end up with a lousy T-shirt, it shouldn't be a laughing matter. In the case of Jesse Helms of North Carolina, his T-shirt says, "Somebody at the State Department loves me," with the word "loves" in a red heart.

This story is not made up. Helms did wear such a T-shirt at a softball game featuring staffers from his office and the office of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. The T-shirt symbolizes an embarrassing "courtship" during which we have seen photographs of Helms and Albright smiling and holding hands. In practical terms, this arrangement means that the United Nations has been given a

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new lease on life, at the expense of American taxpayers.

Many Americans do not realize just how close the U.N. is to fulfilling the goal set by its first acting Secretary General, communist spy Alger Hiss, of becoming a full-fledged world state. Thanks to a federal financial bailout engineered by Senator Helms, the U.N. is poised to expand its international campaign for population control, global environmentalism, managed trade, and military hegemony. Now operating criminal tribunals in Bosnia and Rwanda, the U.N. is also laying the groundwork for an International Criminal Court which could kidnap Americans off the streets, imprison them in foreign jails, and prosecute them before judges from China, Libya, and Iraq. In such proceedings, defendants would have no right to a jury trial and no right to face their accusers—rights guaranteed to Americans under the U.S. Constitution. With a criminal court in place, the U.N. would only need the power of taxation to have all the essential elements of a world government. The current budget of over $10 billion a year could quickly rise to tens of billions, even trillions, with a global tax in place.

The most powerful political figure standing in the way of world government has been Senator Jesse Helms, whom many Americans were counting on to save our rights and sovereignty. Ironically, however, Helms may now go down in history as the senator who saved the world organization from self-destruction, enabling the U.N. to gain valuable time in which to consolidate and expand its power.

Some are already trying to put the best possible spin on the catastrophe. Writing in the *Weekly Standard*, Fred Barnes insisted that Helms had outsmarted Albright and the establishment by getting the Senate to agree to a package of tough "reforms" for the world body. Helms had supposedly been clever and shrewd.

In fact, Helms and Albright made a deal to pay a phony "debt" to the world body under the cover of phony "reform." There is nothing in this deal to be proud of. Instead, it represents total capitulation to the notion that our future as a nation rests in a world managed by unelected international bureaucrats and global elites. It provides them money that they don't deserve and that we don't owe.

The details surrounding the story demonstrate how a long-time hero of conservatives can be compromised to serve the interests of the foreign policy establishment. Barnes himself alluded to the switch, noting that Henry Kissinger, once an archenemy of Helms, had campaigned for him in 1996. But Barnes tried to insist that Helms had secured support without changing his political position.

Unfortunately, many of Senator Helms's constituents and associates have told me that the senator has changed. Age may be a factor, but explanations vary. Some say it's because he doesn't want to go down in history as an obstructionist. Others say that he made a deal with the Clinton White House because he didn't want his Senate Foreign Relations Committee to be cut out of the process of managing foreign affairs legislation.

In any event, Helms has a new staff, some of whom are arrogant, inaccessible, and suspiciously "moderate." This is not to say that Helms has suddenly become a liberal. After all, he fought the chemical weapons treaty and the nomination of William Weld as ambassador to Mexico. He can be expected to battle the proposed International Criminal Court. But on the issue of the U.N.'s immediate and long-term survival, "Senator No" became "Senator Yes."

The explanation for this turnaround may lie, in part, in his controversial personal relationship with Albright, who served as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. His dealings with Albright have been one of the most talked-about and disturbing topics of the year. For whatever reason, both Helms and Albright decided they should work together, especially on the U.N. problem. This alliance came in handy for Albright because of revelations that she misrepresented her family history, including her Jewish past. Writing in *The Forward*, a Jewish paper, E.V. Kontorovich said Albright lied about her Jewish background because "she preferred it not to be true." Although her Jewish background did not become widely known until after her confirmation as Secretary of State, many in Washington knew about her deception.

But because Albright is a woman, and because Helms accepted her dubious "anticommunist" credentials, this controversy was ignored and she was confirmed to the post, becoming the first female U.S. Secretary of State. She promptly announced that she would push for ratification of the feminist Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), a U.N. treaty which would mandate government regulation of the economy in the name of women's rights. However, Albright's main mission has been to save the U.N. from financial ruin. In this crusade, Helms has been her willing partner.

The timing was critical: for the first time in its history, the U.N. stood on the brink of financial bankruptcy in 1996. Waste, fraud, and abuse had reached Soviet proportions. The Clinton White House had decided to make Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali into the scapegoat, calling for his ouster. Helms had written an article in *Foreign Affairs*, the house journal of the Council on Foreign Relations, threatening to lead a campaign for America's withdrawal from the world body unless major changes were made. Helms had also condemned U.N. attempts to build a world army and impose global taxes. "As it currently operates," Helms argued, "the United Nations does not deserve continued American support."

These were tough words. But they were not matched by tough action. Boutros-Ghali was evicted but replaced by another veteran U.N. bureaucrat, Kofi Annan of Ghana. Annan's record was even more despicable. Annan was the U.N. director of peacekeeping who helped mastermind and supervise the U.N.'s 1993 Somalia mission that killed 18 American soldiers and left 84 wounded. Annan also presided over the Bosnia fiasco, which resulted in NATO taking over for the U.N.

Miraculously, however, Annan became U.N. Secretary-General and was hailed as a "proven reformer" by President Clinton. Helms seemed to buy it, even though Annan had hired the notorious Maurice Strong as his special assistant on reform. Strong, another veteran U.N. bureaucrat, was a public advocate of global taxes whose idea was to consolidate U.N. operations and thereby make them stronger in the long run.

Eventually, two reform plans were offered—one by Annan and one by Helms. The Annan plan, reflecting Strong's influence, was designed, in the words of Senator Rod Grams of Minnesota, to reshuffle the cards in a deck that remained as big as ever. Even the *Washington Post* called the plan "unremarkable." Both plans required the U.N. to cut 1,000 positions—a far cry from Helms' original call for a 50 per-

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cent cut in the 50,000-strong U.N. bureaucracy—and it turned out the positions were already vacant. The Helms plan also included calls for reductions in the "dues" the U.S. pays to the U.N.

To understand how far Helms moved on the issue, consider what the *Post* declared when the senator announced his plan: "If you measure the Jesse Helms U.N. reform package against what he originally sought—a 50 percent cut in the bureaucracy, a 75 percent cut in the Secretariat's budget, a virtual gutting of the organization's missions in the name of repelling its supposed profligate invasions of its member states' sovereignty—then you will perhaps be relieved at the changes that he and the Senate Democrats and the Clinton administration have now agreed to."

To be sure, Helms had some provisions that seemed pleasing to conservatives. His plan purported to prohibit global taxes by requiring a certificate that such schemes are not being officially promoted by the U.N. bureaucracy. But guess whom the certificate is supposed to come from? Secretary Albright. However, it was under Albright as U.N. Ambassador that the world body moved aggressively to implement these schemes. The leading cheerleader was James Gustave Speth, the Clinton-appointed administrator of the U.N. Development Program.

Assuming that Albright could be trusted to "certify" that the U.N. is not up to no good, the Helms reform plan had an exception in the area of global taxes for global "fees," a dangerous loophole. The Clinton administration is expected to support a variation of a global tax or fee this December when it signs a U.N. treaty to prevent "global warming."

The Helms reform plan also purported to prohibit the U.N. from establishing a world army under its control. However, NATO has since emerged as the de facto military arm of the world organization, operating in the former Yugoslavia under U.N. authorization. This is consistent with the use of "regional organizations" under the U.N. Charter to serve U.N. interests. In addition, a group of European countries and Canada is creating a 4,000-strong "Multinational U.N. Stand-By Forces High Readiness Brigade," for use by the world body. Since this is an initiative of nations, rather than the U.N., it is acceptable under the Helms legislation.

In exchange for these phony reforms, the U.N. gets $819 million of U.S. taxpayer money over a three-year period. This is most of the $1.3 billion the U.N. claims is owed by the U.S. This figure, a subject of much controversy, is derived from U.N. calculations about what the nations of the world are obligated to pay the U.N. for general and peacekeeping expenses. The U.N. bureaucracy has decided that the United States should pay 25 percent of the general costs and 31 percent of peacekeeping. But Congress has withheld some payments as a protest against U.N. mismanagement, and other payments were withheld because of the belief that the United States was being overcharged.

It's here that Helms abandoned not only the truth but the national interest, because he knew in his heart and mind that we owed nothing to the world organization. On February 15, while defending payment of this "debt" to the U.N. during an appearance on the *Evans & Novak* program on CNN, Helms said his recollection was that "about two billion dollars worth of expenditures" had been made by the United States "to support activities of the United Nations that nobody has even thought about reimbursing the American people for." Helms was part of this group, for he had clearly not demanded reimbursement.

The *Washington Times* took a similar position, admitting in an editorial that the money wasn't owed but saying that the payment would provide an "incentive" for U.N. reform. To put it charitably, it appears that Helms was misled by his staff, who failed to inform him about a critical General Accounting Office (GAO) report that put the "debt" issue into the proper context and provided extraordinary details about our true financial relationship with the U.N.

Bob Dole, as majority leader of the U.S. Senate, had requested this report. He realized soon after Clinton took office that funds were being diverted from various federal agencies, especially the Pentagon, to support the U.N. He asked the GAO to investigate, resulting in the publication in March 1996 of a report which showed that, during fiscal years 1992-95, the United States had spent $6.6 billion in support of U.N.-authorized operations in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Somalia, and Haiti. Of this figure, however, only $1.8 billion was counted against American "dues" to the U.N. Of the remaining $4.8 billion, the U.N. reimbursed the United States only $79 million.

The Jesse Helms that we used to know would have demanded our money back. He would have taken a principled pro-taxpayer and pro-sovereignty position, even if the world was united against him. Instead, Representative Roscoe Bartlett, a Maryland Republican, played this role, introducing a bill in the House with the appropriate title of "The United Nations Erroneous Debt Act." More than 60 members cosponsored his bill, including House Majority Whip Tom DeLay of Texas. Bartlett also vowed to introduce amendments to various appropriations bills to cancel payment of this "debt." One of these amendments received 165 votes last September.

Assuming, for the sake of argument, the $1.3 billion "debt" to the U.N., Bartlett subtracted it from the roughly $4.8 billion owed to the United States and concluded that the world body was in arrears to American taxpayers by about $3.5 billion. For its part, the Clinton administration and Madeleine Albright claimed these expenditures were all "voluntary" and that the U.N. could not be expected to credit or reimburse us. They asserted that federal agencies could be looted to support the U.N. and that Congress had no alternative except to pay the bills. The Bartlett legislation was an attempt to reassert the congressional power of the purse. Senator Helms should have championed this cause from the start.

Where would the U.N. get $3.5 billion? Annan said that paying back this money could bankrupt the U.N. and force the organization to sell its New York City headquarters. In fact, the U.N. has a $15 billion pension fund that it could tap into in order to balance its books. Not surprisingly, this is said to be the best-managed program at the U.N. And thanks to Senator Helms, it will continue to grow.

Cliff Kincaid is the director of the American Sovereignty Action Project and the author of Global Taxes for World Government *(Huntington House). For more information about ASAP, please call 1-800-787-5246.*

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EDUCATION

Harkness Road High School

by Isabel Lyman

Hillary Clinton would love Amherst, Massachusetts, a town aptly nicknamed "The People's Republic of Amherst." A stroll down Main Street quickly reveals that Birkenstocks and Volvos dominate the landscape. Amherst's legislative body, the Town Meeting, often votes on the kind of citizen petitions that call on the community (population 35,000) to join the AFL-CIO's "union cities" movement or to block off a busy street so spotted salamanders can make their annual trek to breeding ponds without becoming roadkill.

Amherst, situated in the picturesque Pioneer Valley, is the quintessential college town. Once home to Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson, it now insulates old hippies and left-wing scholars from the traditional values of ordinary Americans. The town's public schools are, of course, fertile ground for the country's most ambitious social engineers. In 1996, the town's four elementary schools displayed a gay and lesbian family photo exhibit with accompanying text. This winter, the Fort River Elementary School principal hosted a blacks-only breakfast for staff and families.

The problem with Amherst educators indoctrinating their charges is that they sometimes succeed in unexpected ways. This winter, junior and senior high students skipped class to join University of Massachusetts/Amherst students who had occupied an administration building to demand an increase in minority enrollment. Most of the time, however, the kids are bored by the propaganda of their elders. And bored kids, particularly adolescents, tend to behave badly. Recently, the junior high school had to be evacuated because four students had stashed homemade bombs in a locker.

To combat this situation, in this Mecca of "value-free" education, Wid Lyman, my husband, decided to start a private, alternative school, the Harkness Road High School (HRHS). Wid is suited to teaching and molding teenagers. He's well-educated (Ph.D. in civil engineering), athletic, lively, goal-oriented, and a strict disciplinarian. However, to assume there are any similarities to a New England headmaster who reads the *New Yorker* and sips cognac is laughable. The son of working-class parents from Massachusetts, Wid's educational philosophy is a combination of the three R's and three C's—conservatism, constitutionalism, and Christianity. Amherst's worst nightmare.

Harkness Road High School, a coed day school, was launched ten years ago in what was formerly a retail poultry business situated on a small, five-acre farm. Animals are raised in a backyard barn which abuts conservation land. HRHS educates students in grades seven through 12, utilizing a mere 2,400 square feet (four rooms) of class space. It is charter-school small—no more than 20 students attend each year.

The academic program is a back-to-basics curriculum with some interesting twists. Each week vocabulary lists of 50 words are handed out for memorization, and students are required to take semester-long courses such as World Geography, U.S. Presidents, and Grammar before graduation. In literature classes, the current high school fare of Alice Walker and J.D. Salinger is eschewed for Charles Dickens and Frank Peretti. Electives have ranged from Constitutional Law, Wars of the United States, and Practical Etiquette, to Communist China and Russia.

Dubious practices like Outcome-Based Education and feel-good multiculturalism are considered heresy. Or, as Doug Bandow recently editorialized about HRHS in the *Washington Times*, our students are likely to be "refugees from political correctness."

While HRHS students good-naturedly complain (sometimes whine) about assignments, they appreciate the personalized atmosphere and tough academic standards—standards which are not for the shiftless. Students in grades 9 through 12 must earn at least a *B* to pass each class. If not, the course has to be repeated. The concept harkens to the old-fashioned notion that learning involves hard work, not just a superficial acquaintance with the material.

Wid is the full-time teacher and is assisted by three part-time instructors. Like a schoolmarm of yesteryear, he shuttles between Latin, calculus, and the Bible. He also assumes the burden of suspending unruly students. Fortunately, there are few behavior problems because the school simply is not alluring to potential juvenile delinquents.

Dennis Petrides is Wid's Man Friday, a pal from his own schooldays. Blessed with a gentle manner, he teaches the younger students and gets voted "nicest teacher" in informal polls. At break time, Denny and Wid challenge willing students to pitch games.

I am also a part-time teacher. My Spanish class recently wrote, starred in, and videotaped a program for children, *"Español Para Niños,"* which we hope to air on a local cable station. One day a week I drop the Marva Collins persona and imitate June Cleaver when I serve the students a hot lunch.

Ken Robinson, our newest addition, is an attorney and the father of one of our students. He teaches honors U.S. History and uses a book authored by Southern apologist Clarence B. Carson. Ken's syllabus to his students reveals a blunt attitude to modern education: "This is not a 'dumbed-down' high school text for public school cretins; it would challenge most college freshman. But don't let that frighten you, most college freshmen are cretins, and their texts are written accordingly."

A vocational component, built into the school year, allows students to participate in the work world for five weeks in May and June, as they volunteer at nursing homes, business offices, farms, newspapers, and elementary schools. One student's 500 hours of vocational work for the U.S. Veterans Affairs Medical Center made him eligible for a college scholarship. Another student's involvement with the *Advocate*, an alternative newspaper, led to a full-time job with the company after graduation.

In general, the school's decentralized, task-oriented approach works. The dress code is casual but neat, and the atmosphere is orderly but not oppressive. Tuition is priced at a relatively low $3,500 per year in order to retain the working-class, often nonreligious families which the school attracts. Even Amherst's municipal employees—the town assessor, the assistant fire chief, and an elected select board member—have enrolled their children in the school, which has helped our status with the local superintendent and regional school board that approve the school's curriculum every few years and then leave us be.

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Our teachers are not "certified," nor is the school "accredited." Our students must create their own extracurricular activities, be content with the daily basketball games during their recess time, type on outdated computers, and make do without science labs. The austere surroundings raise the question: Is it worthwhile to deny a student the perks of a well-funded, albeit eccentric, public school to transfer to our bare-bones operation? Here's one student's perspective.

Nicholas Keenan transferred to HRHS from Amherst Regional High School in his junior year. Nick was well-liked by his public school teachers, and his peers were the school's most articulate students. A published essay Nick wrote comparing his public education to his private education is illuminating. Nick (now a 4.0 honors student majoring in Japanese at a state university) noted: "I knew about the heroic efforts of Martin Luther King, Jr., Harriet Tubman, and Frederick Douglass; but I had barely heard of other historical greats such as James K. Polk, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster (I thought he wrote the dictionary), Andrew Jackson, and even Thomas Jefferson. Although I had been taught about Darwinism, I was almost completely ignorant of Christianity and the Bible."

He continues: "I could also talk a blue storm about how racism has ripped apart America, but my math, English, social studies, and even French were compromised because of it. In other words, my teachers deemed it necessary to jeopardize my education by filling my brain with 'What I Should Believe' and 'How I Should Act' propaganda."

For skeptics who insist that little schoolhouses are a step backward into the 19th century, I offer the following academic tidbits: 14 of the 16 HRHS graduates have gone on to college; alumnus Craig Webster was named a National Merit Scholar in the school's third year; and last year, sophomore Morgan Robinson scored a perfect 800 on the verbal portion of the PSAT and has since then been selected as a semifinalist for a 1998 National Merit Scholarship.

Character education proponents might be impressed that a group of HRHS students were hired to tear down a barn in Connecticut, a two-day job for which the crew was paid $3,000. Amherst Town Hall employees regularly request our students to work in the collector's office. And when a serious drug problem among Amherst teenagers became a town-wide crisis, Joe Hession, a junior, organized a collaborative letter-to-the-editor explaining how HRHS students are educated in a drug-free environment.

This summer, HRHS embarked on its most ambitious project to date: the building and selling of a home. The profits will be used to upgrade the facilities and allow the school to accept two or three more students.

Wid and I liken this modest endeavor in a hotbed of liberalism to the labors of the monks during the Dark Ages. Even if we only teach a tiny percentage of western Massachusetts' teenage population, we feel we are following the advice that says if you cannot feed 100 children, feed one. Our prayer is that our tribe—educators that honor the 2,300 years of the Western tradition and that can speak the language of teenagers—would increase. We are encouraged that one woman who sought our counsel founded a classical Catholic school in a neighboring county.

Meanwhile, we are looking forward to the class of 1999's commencement. That's when Daniel, our son, will graduate from HRHS—that is, if he passes all his courses (with at least a *B*).

Additional information about HRHS can be obtained by writing Isabel Lyman at 264 Harkness Road, Amherst, Massachusetts, 01002.

PHILOSOPHY

Thomas Molnar and Late Modern Decadence

by Paul Gottfried

Thomas Molnar has published books in English, French, and Hungarian, while seeing some of his writings, mostly those dealing with the "*mal moderne*," translated into German, Spanish, and Italian. Though defined in his work in various ways, from rampant Catholic heresy to political utopianism, this evil for Molnar is best described by his phrase *l'hégémonie libérale*. The progression of hegemonic liberalism since the 18th century, which he thinks was nurtured by both the Protestant Reformation and the Enlightenment, has led to dire consequences, including the disintegration of ecclesiastical authority, an obsessively consumerist society, a religion of secularism, and, finally, a "reconstruction of the state as a profoundly coercive caricature" of political authority.

Most striking about these critical observations, which do seem justified, is Molnar's intensive search for long-range causes. This often results in connections being assumed between modern evils and temporally distant developments. Molnar insists, for example, that one cannot understand today's moral anarchy or parody of a state without looking back to the late Middle Ages, specifically to the breakdown of medieval forms of interrelated secular and ecclesiastical authorities and to the attack made on their essentialist philosophical foundations. This progressive undoing of medieval authorities did more than subvert corrupt institutions. It had the ultimate effect of devaluing authority itself, as something to which deference is due and which in turn is bound by a higher law. In this widening rebellion, Molnar sees the contributions of many thinkers and movements, extending from nominalism, Luther, Calvin, Hobbes, Descartes, and the "temptation of German philosophy" to deify individual consciousness, down to the atomistic hedonism and sexual kinkiness associated with contemporary America: "*ce théatre permanent du bouffon et de l'absurde, la langue neutralisée, officiellement dissolue, et l'armée homosexualisée.*"

What makes liberalism a unifying theme in this brief is the growing centrality of individual expressiveness and individual will. Though Molnar does not imagine that a straight causal line can be drawn from William of Ockham to Hillary Clinton—that is, from the 14th-century English monk who denied the possibility of demonstrating moral and theological axioms to a self-actualizing feminist as world-historical figure—he nonetheless believes that one things leads to another—or in his own idiomatic French, *tout se passe du fil en aiguille*. Moreover, it might behoove those who, according to him, have entered the "terminal phase of a mortal illness" caused by "defective social organization" to retrace the steps by which society got to

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where it is. This involves looking at the transitional stages by which a traditional hierarchical society became one in which nothing is thought to warrant respect unless the individual finds it in his interest to value it. The victory of this self-centered ethos, Molnar notes, has not put an end to either religious longing or mythic obsession. In other words, the desacralization ascribed by sociologists to a post-Christian age has not created the total spiritual void that many religionists complain of. More significant has been the quest for a new spirituality that has given rise to a variety of cultural phenomena, from New Age cocktail talk to inexhaustible therapeutic utopias.

Though Molnar is widely known as a Catholic Aristotelian with some sympathy for Plato, his philosophical interests, as revealed in his conversations with Jean Renaud, are remarkably broad. He professes high regard for both existentialist and pre-Socratic thought and considers Greek atomism a "marvelous discovery." He is impatient with Christians, Catholic and Protestant, who fuss about the incompatibility between the biblical and classical worlds. He insists that Christians "will always be indebted to Athens," that philosophy is "an authentic activity of the spirit," and that philosophical discourse is basic to the Christian formulation of belief. This argument, it might be noted, is true not only for those who profess to be Christian humanists but equally for those on the other side. Such distinguished critics of humanistic Christianity as Luther, Zwingli, and Barth offer densely reasoned arguments for their antihumanism, while showing staggering evidence of a classical education. If neither is evident in the antihumanist posture of contemporary fundamentalists, both are likewise absent from the tracts of Christian liberals. The capacity to produce reasoned discourse and the acquisition of classical learning, both long associated with theology and philosophy, are becoming divorced from American education; and this, far more than a theological stand on Greek thought, Molnar claims, has marginalized the cumulative cultural traditions of the West.

Molnar has often highlighted the role of one social democratic philistine who has heavily influenced American educators, John Dewey. Discovering a lack of political relevance in the teaching of classical languages, Dewey hoped to devise a largely technical education, one that he thought would be suitable for a reformed democratic America. Such an attitude tells more about the genetic causes of our educational problems than the effects attributed by movement conservatives to the hippie decade of the 1960's.

My own reservation about Molnar's case against late modernity is his tendency to push back explanations too far. Is it helpful, for example, to revisit the Reformation in order to comprehend modern liberalism or the pervasiveness of American materialism? One may concede the point that Protestantism, particularly in its Calvinist formulation, predisposes believers to be relatively individualistic, compared to Catholics, in searching for salvation. One may, furthermore, accept Max Weber's view that a correlation exists between Calvinist moral theology and the capitalist spirit. But even if one concedes the above, one has still not found more than a single factor in the creation of the vast historical trend leading to the present. And the limiting cases that historians must consider are endless. Indeed some of the most deeply conservative groups up until recently have been Calvinist, from American Southern Presbyterians and Dutch and Afrikaner farmers to Hungarian gentry and Swiss burghers. By contrast, some Catholic populations have been raving fanatics of modernization and, in the case of the Dutch Church, have cheered on the "imbecility" that Molnar laments in criticizing contemporary moral fashions. Though Molnar ascribes these developments to Catholic imitations of Protestant behavior, the more likely explanation is that both sides have been simultaneously overwhelmed by the same mass democratic trends.

Despite my difficulty with Molnar's intricate genealogy of morals, he correctly observes that we are looking only at the tip of an iceberg. Things did not start going bad in our society because kids in the 1960's took to smoking marijuana or because George McGovern won the Democratic nomination in 1972. The collapse of the family and of gender identity which I have witnessed in my adult years is as dramatic an event as any 20th-century totalitarianism. But this cataclysm is taken for granted even by mainstream American conservatism, which only quibbles at the edges over disastrous government policies. At my college and at professional gatherings, I hear white male professors expressing guilt over making, unbeknownst to others, racial and gender distinctions in their minds. Gay rights, among other hallucinatory "human" rights, are a given among most educated Americans today; and while we protest the infanticide being practiced in the impoverished Chinese countryside, we proclaim partial-birth abortion a "women's issue" in feminist America. Add to this a boundless hunger for new commodities and gadgets, and one get a sense of the "disfigured model" of the American constitutional republic for which Molnar is always reaching as an illustration of late modern decadence. He is right to ask how this model became so disfigured, and while one may disagree with the details of his causal explanation, he is also right to look deeply for answers.

Paul Gottfried is a professor of humanities at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania.

Failures of Promise

by Timothy Murphy

A flock of crows
found a road-killed ewe
frozen in the snow.
A drowsy bear
dragged a leg-shot deer
to its deadfall lair.
The lamb in the ewe
and the fawn in the doe
were devoured unborn,
and November snows
buried the standing corn.

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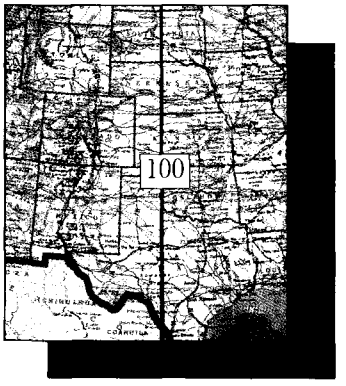
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

On the Border With Crooks, and Friends



It was time to look into getting hold of two *barrera* seats if we were going to attend the coming *corrida* at the Plaza Monumental de Toros in Juárez. From Las Cruces I telephoned Jim Rauen 190 miles away in Belen and tapped into what sounded like a conversation between drug dealers speaking in heavily accented English.

"This is Stinky, man, I got the Uzis today, go east on Candelaria to Gordo's Bar where the Spanish Lords hang out, and—"

I hung up fast and redialed the number, carefully this time. Jim answered the phone.

"Good morning, Sir."

"Sir, good morning. Was that you calling a minute ago?"

"Was that you answering?"

"My nephew Stephen's been practicing his voices for the machine. 'S up?"

"Are we going to the bullfight Sunday after next?"

"I won't be able to make it. I'm flying to Chicago for ten days."

"That's too bad. Maybe just as well though."

"How so?"

"You haven't heard?"

"Heard what?"

"Just after the fight let out August third, two men with AK-47's shot up Max-Fim's and killed six people."

"No kidding. We've had drinks at Max-Fim's. Juárez sounds like a good place to stay away from for a while."

"That could be. Go on up to Chicago and have a good time. Keep away from guys carrying violin cases."

Right now the Mexican-American border is more chaotic than it has been for many years. On July fourth a man named Amado Carrillo Fuentes died in Colombia under the knife of a plastic surgeon attempting to sculpt for him a face that would be unrecognizable, if not more beautiful. Carrillo was reputed to have been a leader of the Juárez drug cartel and the most powerful drug lord in Mexico; his death, less than a year after an American court convicted Juan Garcia Abrego, formerly head of the Mexican Gulf cartel operating from Matamoros, of drug-related activities, created a vacuum in the Mexican drug trade. Since the Institutional Revolutionary Party, the military, and the drug cartels are not always separable from one another, the barons were already reeling from the national elections in May, when the PRI lost its majority in the lower congressional house, and its candidates for the mayoralty of Mexico City and the governorships of several states were defeated. These men being known to respond to stress in the simplest and most direct way, their present insecurity is the best explanation available for the rash of recent killings on both sides of the border but in Juárez especially, where the Max-Fim massacre was followed by the drive-by shooting of an attorney for the restaurant and the abduction and killing of four Juárez physicians who treated him. Hit-men living on American soil cross the Rio Grande for a night's work assassinating Mexican policemen, while their opposite numbers in Mexico come the other way to kill American cops. Everywhere along the border private citizens as well as officers of the law are being murdered, people abducted, public servants suborned, witnesses intimidated. When General Barry McCaffrey, President Clinton's drug czar, visited El Paso and other border cities in August, the cartels openly threatened his life and an extra retinue had to be added to his bodyguard.

You can buy bullfight tickets at the Kentucky bar in Juárez or from Bobby Ramirez, the ticket agent and proprietor of Papa's in El Paso. I thought things over for a day or two, and called Melody Smith in Hurley.

"Is this Melody Smith?"

"Yes it is."

"Melody Smith recently moved from Dubois, Wyoming?"

"Yes."

"I've heard about you. Would you like to take a trip into the Gila on horseback, weekend after next?"

"Are you down here already?"

"I moved at the beginning of August. I miss Wyoming terribly."

"I miss it too. What did you say your name was?"

Melody was off work from the Chino Mining Company in Hurley at eight in the evening on Friday, too late for a start into the mountains. We put my horse into the corral with her mare, went for supper at the Gateway Plaza, and left the next morning, stopping for supplies in Bayard. Melody's Sweet Pea rode with my Star in the trailer, and we had her dog Tessa, looking like a cross between a Blue Heeler and a border collie, in the bed of the pickup truck.

"I was disappointed the first time I rode into the mountains," Melody confessed. "But I went again last weekend with friends and saw country that looked much more like Wyoming—like what we're used to."

The road from Silver City wound north among hills covered by dark green forest. After what seemed like a long ride, we turned out on a dirt road and continued west, climbing through high, increasingly steep country for seven miles to the Sheep Corrals. In one of the corrals a fine-looking paint ran the fence nickering, while away from them at the edge of the woods the mountain lion hunters, surrounded by hounds, sat watching in front of their tents. We saddled up, loaded on the packs, and rode off into the forest, Tessa ranging ahead of the horses. The drainage went downhill through tall Ponderosa pines and live oak growing in the sunny places. Melody looked back at me as we rode. She was smiling.

"How's your horse?"

"He's fine. He's doing what he loves to do."

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"And the weather's perfect," she said happily.

Beyond the forest edge was a burn caused by a lightning strike, where after a few years the pine and juniper trees were growing back among the blackened snags, the grass, and the wildflowers. Riding across the openness that covered the ridgeline we viewed nearly the whole of the southernmost country of the Gila, as far as the Black Range bordering the Rio Grande Trench. Clouds were making up in the sky overhead, but they were white friendly clouds, floating softly above the confusion of the near green hills toward the blue distant ridges at the horizon.

"So this is the Gila," I said. "I've been wanting to take a horse in here for eight years."

"It's all lava flow from a volcano in the Black Range. I couldn't understand how molten lava could flow so far, but they don't mean that kind of flow. They mean ash and gas carried in the atmosphere and deposited miles away."

A two-track road ran on top of the ridge. We followed it out to a primitive turnaround from which the country sloped steeply down on three sides.

"Is that the Gila River?" I pointed toward a steep-walled canyon cut deep enough that the bottom could not be seen from where we stood.

"That's Sapillo Creek. The Gila is over there." Melody waved a hand at the dry wilderness of rock and trees.

We dropped off the shoulder of the ridge, following the trail as it switchbacked across the pitched meadow thinly grown with pine, juniper, and prickly pear. The mountains lifted around as we descended, and suddenly I glimpsed the Gila itself between the trees, 50 or 60 miles into its journey to Yuma, Arizona, and the Colorado River. It was a thrilling sight, the segment of shining water in its red canyon, shaded by big trees, the green meadows filling in the bends. We dropped lower and still lower, following the trail down, until we were looking over the spreading crowns of giant sycamores, their branches and trunks starkly white in the afternoon light. While locusts shrilled in the trees we made camp in the bottom above Sapillo Creek, rebuilding the firepit left by elk hunters, dragging up wood from the floodplane, and raising the tent. Relieved of their loads the horses, still under saddle, grazed the well-watered grass.

"Let's take a ride now," I begged.

Across Sapillo Creek, past the remains of mortared dwellings belonging to the Mogollon Culture set 50 feet up under an overhang of cliff, we came after a tenth of a mile to the confluence of the Sapillo and the Gila, at the place where the river makes a hairpin bend from the north around a lava wall before turning west. The shallow water, sliding smoothly over gravel between grassy banks overgrown with tangled blackeyed daisies, meandered in a floodplane spiked by crooked cholla and the headed stalks of mullen. Riding upriver we crossed and recrossed the channel, the horses splashing the water happily while Tessa struggled against the current, between shaded pine and juniper cliffs on the west bank and the sunlit terraces of juniper, mesquite, and Spanish bayonet above the east one.

"Now this is something new," I told Melody.

"It's different, but also it's another part of the same thing. When I saw it a week ago I decided yes, I can be happy down here for a while, seeing what there is to see."

"It's a paradise really."

"The river's nice, but I miss being able to look out. Do you want to climb up and try going back along the top?"

The hillside was steep beneath the waxy brown pine needles. We dismounted to lead the horses, struggling upward on game trails imprinted with the track of elk toward the elusive sky endlessly receding beyond the highest line of the trees. Clambering over broken rimrock we arrived finally, sweat-soaked and breathless, in an open park with a view of the high mountains around and the black canyon of the Gila in cross-section cutting west into the golden track of the setting sun.

"Does this make you happy now?"

"Of course. Doesn't it make you?"

But from here there was no way back to camp above the river, and Melody got a thorn embedded painfully in her thumb when she stopped to pick the ripe fruit of a prickly pear cactus to eat. With less than an hour left of daylight, we worked our way down to the Gila again by a steep draw, leading the tired horses around trees and over outcrops of lava. In camp we built a fire and set two cans of chili con carne on the coals. Melody went off with her sleeping bag and spread it on the bank above Sapillo Creek.

"You're going to sleep out? This is snakey country if I ever saw it."

"I like to be able to see the stars."

"Well, if you aren't snakebit by morning maybe I'll try it next time."

Sitting with our backs against a log we watched the moon rise over the canyon wall through flashes of sheet lightning and talked of many things, among them horses, men and women, God, and the inevitability of missing Mass the next day. If any excuse exists for flirting with mortal sin, perhaps Sunday on the Gila is it.

Climbing above the canyon the following afternoon we heard thunder behind us and turned to look back at the wilderness we were leaving. Black clouds lay upon the Gila, drenching it with a gray rain, and more storms were gathering in other portions of the sky, drawing together over the mountains. We rode on across the burn the lightning had made, and I remembered the Kneeling Nun near Hurley, whom God (according to local legend) had transformed by a lightning bolt to a tower of rock for her adultery. The rain came just as we reached the safety of the forest edge, great round drops of warm water that soaked the horse and my pant legs below the oilskin jacket. Full of gratitude to God for not having turned me to a pillar of stone for missing Mass, I drove to Las Cruces through the monsoon, dropped the gelding off in Doña Ana, fixed a stiff whiskey, and went to bed.

In the morning, surrounded by sweated horse blankets and other gear, I opened the *Las Cruces Sun-News* and read of fresh killings in Juárez. An hour after 3,000 citizens of the city dispersed from a rally demanding an end to the violence, as the crowd was leaving the Plaza Monumental, two men carrying AK-47s stepped from a car outside Geronimo's Bar across the street from Max-Fim's and opened fire, killing four people. A university student from El Paso was among the dead. I closed the paper thinking how glad Jim Rauen was going to be to have gone to Chicago, and carried the blankets outside in the sun to dry.

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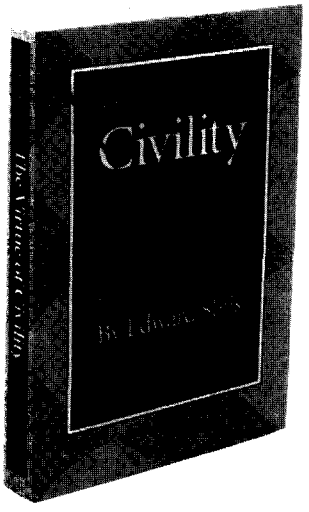

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